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*Buddhist Studies Review and the
UK Association for Buddhist Studies*

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The journal's main aim is to promote the academic study of Buddhism through the publication of original research articles, international collaboration of all scholars who specialize in a variety of topics. IBSR aims to hold an annual conference and to help inform people of the ongoing works of scholars, and of any relevant conferences, visiting scholars, seminar series, etc., through IBSR, its handbook, its web-site (<http://www.understandingbuddhism.org/>), and E-mail circulars.

Frontispiece: the calligraphy in Sino-Vietnamese characters (Nôm) by Ven Thích Huyền-Vi reads:

*Mental phenomena are preceded by mind, have
mind as their leader, are made by mind.
If one acts or speaks with an evil mind, from
that sorrow follows him, as the wheel follows
the foot of the ox.*

Dhammapada I v.1 (tr. K R Norman)

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Buddhist Studies Review and the UK Association for Buddhist Studies

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THE TRIALS OF YAŚODHARĀ AND
THE BIRTH OF RĀHULA

A Synopsis of *Bhadrakalpāvadāna* II-IX

Joel Tatelman (Toronto)

Consider the following outline. The beautiful and virtuous princess, without peer among women, waits in her palace, pining for her royal husband. He, though heir to a mighty kingdom, is far away, dedicated to a great and noble quest fraught with many perils. Meanwhile, the prince's wicked cousin, lusting for political power and for his wife, sets in motion a consummately evil plan to acquire the one and possess the other. Yet he cannot prevail against the princess's virtue and love for her husband. When she repudiates him, hot desire quickly becomes passion for vengeance. Far easier prey is the hero's aged father, the king himself, grief-stricken at his son's disappearance and terrified that the young man will perish and thus bring his royal line to an end. The evil prince's campaign of rumour, innuendo and accusation ensures that the old man begins to doubt the legitimacy of his daughter-in-law's child. Soon the malevolent fellow has duped the hapless monarch who, convinced that only his nephew can save the dynasty and the kingdom, makes him regent. Now the villain need only destroy the princess and her unborn child and the throne will be his. However, to his great frustration, even with royal authority placed in his hands, each scheme to dispose of the princess fails for, time and time again, supernatural forces preserve and vindicate her. Eventually the villain is exposed. The king sentences him to death; only the princess's intervention saves him.

Yet the princess's trials are not over. When the long-awaited child is born, everything about him seems to confirm the nagging doubts about his mother's fidelity, for everything he seems to be, the prince is not, and everything the prince is, he seems not to be. The evil cousin waxes hopeful and again spreads lies about the boy's paternity. The desperate hope of the royal family and their subjects is that the prince will return and set everything

right. Then the narrative shifts to focus on the prince and for hundreds of pages we are left in suspense. In the end, however, the hero, having succeeded in his quest, returns home to affirm his wife's virtue and his son's legitimacy and to usher in a new golden age.

Such is the fairy-tale plot of the *Bhadrakalpāvadāna* [BKA], reminiscent of many stories from many cultures in which the faithful wife, left behind by the questing husband, undergoes her own series of trials, more or less parallel to her husband's. Indeed, '[t]he epic hero tends to define himself by leaving a woman behind'¹. In the *Odyssey* of Homer, the hero Odysseus leaves Penelope; in the *Aeniad* of Virgil, Aeneus abandons Dido. In the *Rāmāyana*, Rāma, albeit unintentionally, leaves Sītā; in the Tamil epic *Tale of an Anklet* (*Cilappatikāram*), the death of her husband Kōvalan forces the heroine Kannaki to fend for herself². In Buddhist literary tradition, Prince Siddhārtha, the future Buddha, abandons Yaśodharā in order to set out on his quest for a solution to the riddle of human suffering. Except in the *Cilappatikāram*, where Kannaki herself is the protagonist, all these women are subsidiary characters, defined largely or entirely in relation to the male hero. In the Buddhist tradition, the *Bhadrakalpāvadāna*, or 'Extraordinary History of our Auspicious Era', the subject of the present study, presents an interesting variant on this theme. While this text, composed in Nepal as late as the sixteenth century, draws on a variety of much earlier legends, it departs from these in making the abandoned woman, if not an independent heroine, at least the central character in her own extended narrative. To my mind, this in itself justifies renewed study of a work which, for more than a century, Western scholarship has largely ignored. However, as it turns out, this very long verse narrative merits our attention for a variety of other reasons. With the following synopsis, which is proffered

as no more than a preface to the forthcoming edition and translation, I hope to provoke the interest of others working in the fields of Sanskrit literature, South Asian Buddhism and women in world religions.

In his prefatory verse, the author of the *Bhadrakalpāvadāna* bids us harken to the 'beautiful story of the glorious Śākyā king's return to his native city' (*śrīśākyarājasvapuragata-kathām sundarām* I.1c). The 'Śākyā king' is the Buddha. The city is Kapilavastu, Śākyā royal capital and the Buddha's ancestral home. A comparable expression, 'the story of the return', occurs at the beginning of Ch.X (*pratyāgamanavṛttaka* X.1b [Ce 82a4³]). Chs.II-IX are called, collectively, 'the story of Kapilavastu' (*kapilavastuvṛttaka* II.1d). And indeed, except for Ch.I, which is set first at the Bodhimandapa Vihāra, located either at Gaya near the Buddha's Awakening or at Lalitpur in the Nepal Valley, then at the Rooster Park Monastery in Pāṭaliputra, and finally in the Deer Park at Rāshipatana, the entire story takes place in, near, or en route to, the royal city of Kapilavastu.

The narrative encompasses a period from shortly after Prince Sarvārthaśiddha's departure from home to seek wisdom, to his return as the Buddha to propagate his teaching among the Śākyas, in particular among the members of his own family. It concludes with his grandson Sakalānanda's succession to the Śākyā throne, his father Śuddhodana's retirement to a forest hermitage and his own departure for the Svayambhū shrine in Nepal.

³ Ce = Ms. No. Add. 1411 (copied 1832) in C. Bendall, *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts kept in the University Library, Cambridge* (Cambridge 1883), pp.91-94. Other MSS cited: Ca = Ms. No. B.40 (copied 1832) in R. Mitra, *Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* (Calcutta 1882, 1971), pp.42-47; G = Ms. No.E 8/2 (copied 1790) microfilmed in 1976 by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project; N = Ms. No. MBB-III-8 in the microfilm collection of the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, Carmel, New York. Td = No.266-I (copied 1905) in S. Matsunami, *A Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Tokyo University Library* (Tokyo 1965), pp.99, 219-20. Citations are by folio, page and line number.

1 L. Lipking, *Abandoned Women and Poetic Tradition*, Chicago 1988, p.xvi.

2 R. Parthasarathy (tr.), *The Tale of an Anklet, An Epic of South India: The Cilappatikāram of Ilāṅkō Atikal*, New York 1993, p.13.

Events are not, however, recounted in linear temporal order. Chs.I and X-XXXVIII form a chronologically continuous narrative. Ch.I, as we have seen, presents the Buddha's colloquies with the gods shortly after his Awakening and his decision to return home; X-XXV.195 (Ce 82a4-194a7), his journey from Gayā to Kapilavastu, wonder-working, teaching and gathering disciples as he goes; and XXV.196-XXXVIII (Ce 194a7-381a5), the same activities among the members of his own family⁴. Chs.II-IX, set in Kapilavastu and its environs, concern the twelve years prior to the return and focus not on Sarvārthasiddha but on his wife Yaśodharā. Within this period, II1-IV.212 cover the first two years of Yaśodharā's pregnancy (which correspond to the first two years of Sarvārthasiddha's austerities); IV.213-VIII.10 (Ce 38b1-69b2), the three weeks of Devadatta's regency; and VIII.11-118 (Ce 69b2-73a2), the last four years of the pregnancy (corresponding to the last four years of austerities). The events immediately following the birth of Rāhula, described in IX.1-134 (Ce 73a2-77b6), roughly coincide with those depicted in Ch.I, while IX.135-252 (Ce 77b6-82a4) rapidly skip over the six years corresponding to Chs.X-XXV.195. In this the BKA adopts the chronology of those earlier accounts where Yaśodharā gives birth to Rāhula only after a six-year pregnancy and where the Buddha does not return home for six more years⁵.

4 XXV.196-XXXVIII comprise some 5,200 verses or half the BKA. Of these XXVII-XXXIV (Ce 219a-356b), roughly 3,800 verses, are reworkings of well-known *jātakas* and *avadānas*. Their settings are Kapilavastu or the nearby Banyan Grove only in that the Buddha recounts them in those locations.

5 Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya (T 1425: 365c12-16); Mahāvastu Avadāna [Mv], ed. É. Senart, *Le Mahāvastu* (3 vols, Paris 1882-97), III.172⁵⁻⁶, tr. J.J. Jones, *The Mahāvastu* (3 vols, PTS 1949-56), III.167; Śākyamunibuddhacarita [SBc] 363 (T 190: 908a14-15), tr. S. Beal, *The Romantic Legend of Śākyā Buddha*, London 1875, Delhi 1985; Saṅghabhedavastu [SBV] II.41³⁰-42³, ed. R. Gnoli and T. Venkatacharya, *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu*, Parts I-II, Rome 1978; Bodhisattvāvadānakalpalatā of Kṣemendra [BAKL], ed. P.L. Vaidya, *Avadānakalpalatā*, Darbhanga 1959; LXXXIII.5; Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa [Mppś]

As already mentioned, Chs.II-IX, which total about 2,300 verses — 25% of the total and 40% of the 'story of the present' — take us back in time, covering the twelve years which elapse between Sarvārthasiddha's departure from home and his return as the Awakened One⁶. In these chapters it is his wife, not he, on whom the narrative focuses. She has two names, Yaśodharā ('Gloria') and Gopā ('Protectress'). The villain of the piece, whose lust and ambition drive the plot and whose enmity for the Buddha and Yaśodharā persists to the very end of the BKA, is Sarvārthasiddha's evil cousin Devadatta. Supporting characters include Yaśodharā's parents-in-law, King Śuddhodana and Queen Gautamī; her father Dandapāni, her wise maidservant Manodharā, and her deformed son Rāhula. Other characters include Chandaka, Sarvārthasiddha's squire and childhood friend; Devadatta's virtuous

(T 1509), tr. É. Lamotte, *Le Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna* (5 vols, Louvain/Louvain-la-Neuve 1944-80), II.1004; Kṣudrapitaka (T 203: 496b-c), tr. C. Willemen, *The Storehouse of Sundry Valuables*, Berkeley 1994, pp.240-2. Additional references from Chinese sources, Mppś II.1001-2.

6 'Twelve years have passed since your father willingly went forth from home, while you are a boy of six years. Therefore suspicion has fallen on us' (*dvādaśavarṣasamjātam sa gr̥hān niḥṣr̥taḥ svayam / tvam tu ṣadvāṛṣiko bālaḥ tasmād asmāsu samśayah* // IX.211; Ce 80b3-4), so Devadatta tells Rāhula, seeking to convince the boy that he is a bastard (*kūṇḍā*). So also X.1-2 (Ce 82a4-5), where the arhat Upagupta introduces the chapter by saying to his interlocutor, the emperor Aśoka: 'Harken, O king, to the Story of the Return. At the end of the twelve years came about the reunion of father and son. For six years he (the Buddha) dwelt there [by the River Nairāñjanā] and after six more years bringing succour to people, he slowly made his way homewards' (*śruyatām atha bhūpāla pratyāgamanavṛttakam / dvādaśābdātyaye jātaḥ pitāputra-samāgamah / ṣadvarsam āśritas tatra ṣadavarsāyanam āgataḥ / lokānām pālanam kṛtvā pratyayau śanaiḥ śanaiḥ* //). Much further on, at XXV.492 (Ce 204b2), after he has cured her blindness, Gautamī says to the Buddha: 'Twelve years have I been separated from you; all that time I cried day and night' (*varsāñām dvādaśo jāto viyogo bhavatā saha / etāvat kālaparyantam viraumy aham divāniśam*).

confidante, Dharmadatta; Śuddhodana's treasurer, family priest, chief minister and chamberlain; Dharmasvāmin, the serpent-king and Dharmasuvallabha, the ape-king. In these chapters, Sarvārthaśiddha himself does not appear, as it were, on stage, but is rather a presiding presence to whom the major characters frequently allude. Also appearing, rather like movie extras, are members of the Śākyan assembly or governing council, Yaśodharā's attendants and the men and women of Kapilavastu.

In Ch.XXV, 'The Meeting of Father and Son' (*Pitāputrasamāgama*), Śuddhodana despatches Udayin and Chandaka, Sarvārthaśiddha's childhood friends, to convince him to return to Kapilavastu to bring salvation to his own people. The pair travel to Rājagrha in Magadha, where the Buddha and his disciples are staying at the Bamboo Grove. After Udayin had delivered the king's message, the all-knowing Buddha, although fully aware of all the details, asks him specifically for news of Śuddhodana, Gautamī, Gopā and Devadatta⁷. Udayin's reply may serve as a convenient synopsis of Chs.II-IX:

'O Lord! Pardon the sins of all, O Conqueror! Think of and forget not your father, afflicted by old age, who is without sin! But what need that I inform you who are all-knowing and who possess the six supernormal powers? Even so, I shall report in detail what has transpired. When you left the country it was as if our city was carried off by those waves, the tears of grief. Your father, scorched by grief's flames, fainted repeatedly, while Gautamī and the other palace women seemed to go mad. All the people wandered aimlessly, weeping; the joy you had nurtured departed further and further away, but when Chandaka returned, accompanied by your steed Kanṭhaka, on hearing news of you from Chandaka, it returned to its proper place. Having taken a vow not to eat and intoning your name, Kanṭhaka, consumed by those flames, separation, went to his death. The king, too, scorched by the terrible separation, at that time despatched Udayana [to look for] you, such was his anxiety. Then, learning

⁷ iti tat prārthanām śrutvā sambuddho bhagavān jinah / suhṛdau prahasan
drṣtvā punar jānan samādiṣan // pitroḥ kim kim pravṛttāntam gopāyāḥ kim
abhūt tathā / devadattasya kim cāpi sarvam nihśāṅkhitō vada // XXV.70-1 (Ce
190a3-4).

that Gopā was carrying a child, the king was delighted, as were his grief-stricken subjects, by the hopes [they placed] in that unborn child. When at the end of two years, Yaśodharā had not given birth, your father, †deceived by Śuklodana's son [Devadatta]†, grew wroth, and on hearing the report that you were near death by the Nairājanā River, even more so. Longing to be reunited with you, he appointed viceroy the malevolent, deceptive Devadatta, the speaker of lies. That malevolent one then cast Gopā into a nearby lake, though through the power of her truth a nāga saved her. Enraged, the evil man then had that saintly woman cast into a fire, near the *plakṣa* tree under which Māyā bore you. Gopā's incomparable power met fire with water. Seeing that wonder, the people rejoiced, O Conqueror. Then, in full view, through the power of her truth, Gopā, shining like molten gold, appeared seated amidst the flames. And on that very day the furious [Devadatta] had the pregnant Gopā, who expounds Dharma, cast from a precipice into the ocean. Even then through the power of your Dharma, an ape rescued the faithful Yaśodevī, joyfully carrying her on his shoulders. At the end of six years, she bore a son, Rāhula, at whose birth the entire family seemed to be swallowed by darkness. Your honour, too, is greatly curious, all-knowing and all-accomplishing though you may be! Ah! Alas! He who is called "Great Lord", even when overcome by Destiny, knows all! Gautamī has gone blind from excessive weeping and the king is wasting away, struck down by grief and shame. What has happened to Gautamī is what has happened to the city of Kapilavastu: on a moonless night, how much blacker is it when the constellations are obscured as well? For this reason, return to Kapilavastu, O compassionate one! Tarry not, O protector! Bring the members of your Order, O teacher of the world!⁸

⁸ kṣamasva bhagavan sarvam sarvesām āgasam jina / smṛtvā mā vismara
tātam nirāgasam jarātaram // kiṁ tu vijñāpayāmi tvām sarvajñam ṣad-
abhijnākam / tathāpi tat pravṛttam yan nyavedayāmi vistaram // yadā tvam
nirgato deśat tadārabhya puram nijam / śokāśrujalapātena pravāhitam ivābhavat
// pitā śokānalair digdhah sammūrchito 'bhavan muhuḥ / gautamīpramukhā
devyah pronmattā iva cābhavan // janāḥ sarve vilāpanta itas tataś ca
babhramuh / tvayā sampālito harṣo dūrād dūratarām yayau // tataḥ pratyāgate
chande sārdham kanṭhakavajinā / tvat pravṛttāntam ākarnya chandakāt svastham
āyayau // nirāhārvratam kṛtvā tvannāma pratisamjapan / virahānalataptah
kanṭhako nidhanam yayau // adhikavirahā^d digdhas tatas tvām prati bhūpatih

Chs.II-VIII chronicle the six years during which Yaśodharā suffers the burden of her pregnancy, Sarvārthasiddha practises austerities and Devadatta plots first to marry Yaśodharā and seize the throne, then to destroy her and seize the throne.

Ch.II, 'Yaśodharā, Pregnant', introduces the princess, *enceinte*, but living 'like a widow', dedicating herself to pious and ascetic observances (*vrata*), pining for her husband and bewailing her karma, at once angry that he has abandoned her and longing to imbibe the wisdom she expects he will acquire. Learning that she is carrying the heir to the Śākyā throne, first her parents-in-law, then her ladies-in-waiting, finally her confidante Manodharā strive to convince her to give up her ascetic diet for the sake of the child she bears. Otherwise a most dutiful and compliant wife and daughter-in-law, she obstinately refuses. Only to Manodharā does

/ udyanam atitasamaye 'preṣatad utsukah // āpannasattvām gopā<m> tām
śrutvābhūn mudito nṛpah janāḥ śokākulāś cāpi harṣitā garbhītāśayā //
samvatsaradvayānte 'pi na prasūtā yaśodharā / t̄śauklodanittamatenāsaut
cukopātha bhavadguruḥ // tathā vārtām samākarṇya nairājanāśritasya te /
nisprānavatsthitasyātha prakupitas tathābhavat // athāsau sthāpayām āsa
devadattam durātmakam / tvatsaṃgamasaṃkāṅki vitathavādinām ṣaṭham //
durātmāsau tato gopām hrade 'muṣmin nyapātayat / tasyāḥ satyānubhāvena
cakriṇā rakṣitāpy asau // punah prakupito duṣṭo pāvake 'pātayat satīm / māyāyā
yatā jāto 'si plakṣavṛkṣasamīpataḥ // tasyāḥ prabhāvam atulam
pāvakāmbusamilitam / dr̄ṣṭvā sāscarya<m> muditā janās tatrābhavañ jina // tato
parikṣitā gopā nijasatyaprabhāvataḥ / dravitanakābhā sā babhau
vahnisamāśritā // tasminn eva dīne cāsau samudre 'smīn prakopitaḥ / nyapātayat
bhṛgor gopām garbhini<m> dharmavādinīm // tatrāpi plavago 'rakṣad
bhavaddharmānubhāvataḥ / pativratām yaśodevīm skandhena pravahan mudā /
tato ṣādvatsarānte 'sau prāsūnōd rāhulam sutam / yasmiñ jāte kulaṁ sarvam
tamogragram ivābhavat // bhavān api sukutuki sarvajñāh sarvakṛd api / aho aho
maheśākyo daivākrānto 'pi sarvavit // gautamī samabhud andhā ruditvā bahuśas
tataḥ / mahīpātaḥ kr̄ṣatarah śokatrapāsamāhataḥ // etādr̄śi pravṛttāntam pure
kapilavastuni / niśyāyām candrahīnāyām tā miśreṇa vinā kim u // etaddhetō<r>
bhavann atra prāgaccha karuṇākara / mā vilambam kr̄thā nātha sasāṃghika
jagadguro // XXV.73-96 (Ce 190a4-191a1).

she explain the reason for her intransigence: her husband's prediction, made just before his departure, that she will remain pregnant for six years and endure terrible torments, plus his instruction that in order to save herself she must practise the Poṣadha Observance and recite the protective formula (*dhāraṇī*) which he imparts to her. She also reveals Sarvārthasiddha's prediction of his own six years' ascetic striving and final, triumphant Awakening. Yaśodharā's confession that she conceived asexually elicits from Manodharā a discussion of the various realms (*gati*) and modes (*yoni*) of rebirth. The chapter closes with Yaśodharā persevering in her ascetic practice, that is, in practising the Poṣadha Observance, while the king and entire populace eagerly await the birth of the crown prince.

Ch.III, 'Devadatta, Maddened by Lust and Greed', reveals the childhood roots of Devadatta's hatred for his cousin and portrays his attempts to induce Yaśodharā to marry him, the most certain route, as he sees it, to inherit the throne after Śuddhodana's death. Devadatta's plans for sexual and political conquest are vigorously repudiated, first by his friend Dharmadatta, whom he asks to deliver his proposal to Dandapāṇi, then by Dandapāṇi in person, finally by Yaśodharā herself supported by Manodharā. Dandapāṇi alludes to Devadatta's killing of Sarvārthasiddha's elephant and the origins of his enmity towards his cousin. Manodharā reveals further details of Devadatta's earlier humiliations at Sarvārthasiddha's hands. Also revealed are the likely postmortum destinations of Devadatta, Yaśodharā and Manodharā: rebirth (as an *asura*) in Atala for Devadatta, rebirth (as *anāgāmins*) in Akaṇiṣṭha or Sukhāvatī for the two women. Manodharā delivers a severe rebuke to Devadatta and counsels him to take up the religious life. In reply he reiterates his pretensions to the throne and threatens both her and her mistress with death. The chapter, which also reveals further details of Yaśodharā's religious practice, concludes with Devadatta plotting revenge on the two women.

Ch.IV, 'The Establishment of the Gopā Shrine', opens with a description of the religious practice of Yaśodharā and Manodharā. This centres around reciting the protective verses imparted by Sarvārthasiddha, meditating on Amoghapāśa Lokeśa (Avalokiteśvara) and aspiring to Awakening for the benefit of all.

Śuddhodana, eagerly awaiting his grandson's imminent birth, has his treasurer, Dakṣarāja, make all the preparations for Yaśodharā's lying-in. For his part, the treasurer happily notes the appearance of portents identical to those which presaged the birth of Sarvārthaśiddha. Time passes; the king reminds himself that all is in the hands of Destiny.

When a full year has passed and Yaśodharā has still not given birth, Devadatta claims that people are beginning to question Gopā's virtue, for she is pregnant although her husband left the kingdom more than a year earlier. He further claims that Manodharā is a sorceress who is bewitching the king and arranging adulterous assignations for her mistress. Śuddhodana's confidence in his daughter-in-law is shaken, but Gautamī convinces him that Devadatta is lying. The king resists Devadatta's calumnies for another full year, attributing his nephew's behaviour to the madness already attributed to him by Dandapāni, but when one of his men reports that his son and heir lies by the River Nairājanā dying of starvation, his resistance cracks. Although his chief minister and court priest remind him that Sarvārthaśiddha himself had foretold both his apparent death and attainment of Awakening, the combination of grief over separation from his son and shame over the aspersions cast on Gopā destroys his immunity to Devadatta's poisonous suggestions. Devadatta again argues that Yaśodharā has been unfaithful, that her essential vileness inspired her husband's flight in the first place and that Manodharā is the sorceress who arranges her liaisons. He then promises to effect Sarvārthaśiddha's return and the birth of Yaśodharā's son within twenty-one days if for that period the king will make him regent. Unable to resist, Śuddhodana grants Devadatta full authority over the kingdom and sequesters himself in his chamber of mourning.

Devadatta then issues to the court chamberlain what he claims is the king's own royal edict: 'Let Yaśodharā be cast into some deep lake'. In addition, he produces a letter sent to him, he claims, by Sarvārthaśiddha, in which the prince declares himself ready to return when his wife and Manodharā are dead. The chamberlain proposes to Yaśodharā three ways of saving her life, including him not carrying out his duty. The princess rejects all

these strategies as well as Manodharā's entreaty that she die in her mistress's place, asserting that her own death will wash away the king's shame, that upon death she will attain Sukhāvatī and that in any case the predicament is due to her own karma and so is inevitable. All she asks is clemency for Manodharā, which plea Devadatta later rejects.

Further argument by Manodharā fails to sway Yaśodharā who insists that she cannot evade her destiny (which she explicitly equates with karma). She also maintains, somewhat paradoxically, both that she must die and the hope that her husband will save her. She reminds her friend that the prince will return to teach Dharma and entreats her to make the most of it. Also after lecturing the distraught Gautamī on karmic inevitability, and offering counsel to her co-wives, she sets out for the lake, impeded at every step by weeping citizenry. At the brink of the abyss, Gopā rejects one final plea to save herself — that of her father — with another homily on karma.

For her part, Manodharā, unable to endure life without the princess, performs an Act of Truth, dies immediately and is reborn in the Tuṣita heaven.

Standing on the lakeshore, Yaśodharā confesses her sins and proclaims commitment to leading all beings to salvation. She then performs her own Act of Truth and a series of earnest resolutions (*pranidhāna*), which, in context, amount to foresight. Then she leaps into the lake and lands on the outspread hood of the serpent-king Dharmasvāmin, who has been taking exercise there. The *nāga* carries her down to his palace in Rasātala⁹, where he worships her, learns her identity and begs her to relax and enjoy herself. The narrator then informs us that the spot where Gopā cast herself into the lake immediately became known as 'The Shrine of Gopā's Great Merit', and that after bathing there, the citizens of Kapilavastu sadly make their way back to the city.

Ch.V describes the aftermath of Chapter IV. Devadatta issues

⁹ That Dharmasvāmin's palace is located in Rasātala, one of seven nether-worlds in Purānic cosmology, is only specified at IX.104 (Ce 76b4).

an edict which provides the death penalty for any who openly mourn Yaśodharā's death. Gautamī ignores the proclamation. Devadatta expends much fruitless effort, seeking to convince the queen that her daughter-in-law's death was her son's wish, that Gopā's evil was obstructing Sarvārthasiddha's ascetic practice and so forth. Daṇḍapāni refuses to perform his daughter's funeral rites, and passes days in a grief-stricken vigil by the lake, calling out to Yaśodharā. Dharmasvāmin, once again disporting himself in the lake, overhears these lamentations and, adopting human form, informs Daṇḍapāni's attendants that the princess is safe and sound in the *nāga*-palace under the lake and promises that he will bring her back. Returning to his palace, Dharmasvāmin both urges Yaśodharā to return for her parents' sake and confesses his love for her. Fearing further suffering, she is reluctant to return, but love for her parents and karma draw her back. Hosts of *nāgas* escort her to the surface, where she is greeted with great joy. Father and daughter relate their experiences to each other. Daṇḍapāni praises Dharmasvāmin.

Yaśodharā now learns the brutal news of Manodharā's death, mourns at great length and, feeling unworthy, removes the jewels the *nāga* had given her. Daṇḍapāni gives the spot just named after his daughter a second name, 'Shrine of the Nāga-Lord', and recites a hymn of praise to Dharmasvāmin in the metre called 'Arrival of the Serpent' (*bhujangaprayāta*). The men and women of Kapilavastu praise Yaśodharā and also discuss her karma. Sent for by Gautamī, Yaśodharā now reveals to her mother-in-law Sarvārthasiddha's prediction that she would remain pregnant for six years and tells her of the protective amulet he gave her. Both women marvel at his wisdom.

Ch.VI, 'Gopā is Cast into the Fire' (*gopāgnipātana*), opens with Devadatta busily justifying his actions to Suddhodana. Again referring to the forged letter, Devadatta claims that Sarvārtha-siddha has identified Yaśodharā as an evil sorceress (*dākinī-mantrapāragā*) bent on destroying the Sākyā lineage and that he is relying on his capable cousin to destroy her. Devadatta insists that only mastery of such spells or, as he claims some citizens believe, the power of her amulet, also of demonic origin (*rakṣā-paiśācikī*), could have saved Gopā from death in the lake. Still

swayed by the promise to reunite him with his son, the king reiterates that the kingdom is in Devadatta's hands, but warns him to commit no evil (VI.17 [Ce 55a5-b6]).

Devadatta then orders the entire court and citizenry to the Lumbinī Grove, where Sarvārthasiddha was born, and despatches the chamberlain to fetch Gopā. Once there, the narrator describes the beauties of the grove and Devadatta feigns grief over the premature death of Queen Māyā, the prince's birth-mother, while declaring himself thankful that she cannot see what has transpired in Kapilavastu. He then invokes Sarvārthasiddha to aid him in ridding the kingdom of the 'mother of (female) imps' (*dākinī-mātā*). The officials and citizens listen, fascinated and horrified (VI.17-38 [Ce 55b6-56b3]).

Meanwhile, the chamberlain announces Devadatta's new order to Yaśodharā who in turn informs Gautamī, assuring the queen that Sarvārthasiddha's powerful protective amulet (*rakṣā garī-yasi*) will save her. She also foretells that due to evil heaped up in previous births (*pūrvāropitakāluṣā*) she will without doubt be cast into a fire and from a cliff¹⁰. Yaśodharā then performs an abbreviated version of her religious Observance and sets out for Lumbinī, accompanied by the chamberlain and attended by her ladies-in-waiting (VI.39-46 [Ce 56b3-7]).

After the narrator adds in his own voice conventional descriptions of the vernal fecundity and beauty of the Lumbinī Grove (VI.47-51 [Ce 56b7-57a2]), Gopā gives the lie to Devadatta's hypocritical sentimentality by paying unmistakably heartfelt homage to the tree which Māyā grasped in giving birth; she also meditates inwardly on Sarvārthasiddha. Then, publicly acknowledging Devadatta's authority, she places herself at his disposal (VI.52-57 [Ce 57a2-5]).

Devadatta now addresses the crowd, insisting that he himself is merely the unwilling instrument of the king, who cannot endure the shame that Yaśodharā has brought on the royal family and who longs for reunion with his son. Devadatta declares that

¹⁰ *bhrgvagnipātā tenāham kariṣyate na samśayah* // VI.44cd (Ce 56b5-6).

all who do not assist in carrying out the sentence proposed by the prince and ordained by the king will be guilty of treason, adding that Sarvārthasiddha intends to return to take up his royal duties. He then orders Yaśodharā burnt, at the same time intimating that her black magic (*dākinīmantra*) will protect her. When the crowd's opposition becomes evident, Devadatta assaults Gopā; the people then provide sufficient corvée labour to build a pyre. Many flee, others curse Devadatta. Logs are piled high (VI.58-72 [Ce 57a5-b6]).

Various spectators discuss the situation. Some do not understand the nature of the drama unfolding; others castigate Devadatta for destroying the forest; yet others counsel Yaśodharā to flee. She explains that since she is entangled in karma's net, there is nowhere she can flee and by way of illustration cites her short-lived stay in Dharmasvāmin's palace¹¹ (VI.73-80 [Ce 57b6-58a3]).

As one of Devadatta's followers lights the pyre, Yaśodharā declares to her cousin that she fears no punishment he can mete out, asserting that it was due to his own demerit (*abhāgya*) that the first death-sentence came to naught and suggesting that if he has any merit (*bhāgyavān*), i.e., if there be any substance to his charges, she will soon be dead (*apajīvikā*). This moves Devadatta to reiterate that all is the doing of the king and prince. He even claims he many times pleaded with the king on Yaśodharā's behalf, but that her own husband writes that she is an adulteress, honoured by demons, who must be consigned to the flames¹². Devadatta counsels Yasodharā not to save her own life when the welfare of the kingdom is at stake and even instructs her to remove the protective amulet (*rakṣā*) and cast herself into the

11 *karmapāśābhibandhitvāt parāyāmī kutaḥ katham / nāgendrabhavanaprāptā iti pratyāha tān satī // VI.80 (Ce 58a2-3)*

12 *tvaddhetau bhūmipālam tam vijnāpayāmy anekadhā / tatrāpi prahitam patram tathāpi kūpitāv ubhau // sākṣaram prahitam tena jāriṇīm (jālā° codd.) dākinīmatām (°nīm matām codd.) vahnau prapātaya iti matsamgamasamutsukah // VI.88-89 (Ce 58a6-7)*

flames, claiming that if she is truly a devoted and faithful wife (*pativrata*), Sarvārthasiddha will surely protect her (VI.81-92 [Ce 58a3-b2]).

The narrator then devotes one *śloka* and three *śragdhārā* verses to describing the grief of all the plants, animals and birds in the forest and their efforts to prevent Devadatta from carrying out the sentence (VI.93-96 [Ce 58b2-6]).

Passing her amulet to a friend, Yaśodharā recites an encomium to the teaching she practises. Then, in order to demonstrate the power of truth to the ignorant, she challenges the flames to consume her if she has been unchaste (*svairinī*). Bowing to the 'leader of the Five Omniscient Ones' (*pañcasarvajñānyaka*), she proclaims a series of earnest resolutions (*pranidhāna*): that the flames burn up all her sin as water washes dirt from cloth, but that if she be pregnant by a paramour (*jāragarbhā*) or 'honoured by female demons' (*dākinīmatagā*), they should reduce her to ashes; that if, in her present life, she has not once committed any of the 'ten evil deeds' (*daśakuśalaka*), she should, by the power of that truth, remain unscathed by the flames; that the (evil) deeds of the people come to maturity in her and be consumed in the fire; that no woman should endure pregnancy for six years; and that by the power of her truth and her earnest resolution, may all attain release (*apavargaka*). Then, before the weeping crowd, Gopā leaps into the flames (VI.97-112 [Ce 58b6-59a7])¹³.

13 *atha tatyāja gopā tām mahārakṣām api svayam / dharmataḥ prabhaved rakṣā sarvasya rakṣako hy asau // sahihaste samarpyavam uvāca saṃsmitānanā / svadharmaṇamāhātmyaṁ prakāśayann ivotsavaiḥ // ratnatrayaṇaṁ namasyāmi śaraṇyaṁ śaraṇārthinaṁ / durgatuyuttarane setum mokṣadam sakālārthadam // pratyakṣam pañcabhūtānām paśyami drṣyatām janaiḥ / jagatītrayasthāsatvānām sakalakarmasākṣiṇām // bhrātrīvacanam ākarṇya nīrakṣātra patāmy aham / tadā vahne svairinī cet tvayā samyag pradāhyatām // yady api maranā-kāṅkiṣi adya tu jīvitārthini / satyaprabhāvam atulam darśayitum abodhakān // ity uktvā pranidhiṁ bhūyaś cakārendradigānanā kṛtaṇjalipuṭā natvā pañcasarvajñānyakam // pūrvajanmasu yat pāpam iha loke 'pi vā kṛtam / tat sarva<m>dāhayatv agnir vāso malam yathā jalām // kim tv aham jāragarbhā (jālā° codd.)*

Yet Gopā has additional protection: in eleven *śloka* followed by twelve *mālinī* verses, her son, *in utero*, petitions the goddess Pratisarā to save his mother and himself (VI.113-136 [Ce 59a7-60b3]). The foetal Rāhula identifies Gopā's protective amulet as that of Pratisarā which, by deception, her enemy Devadatta has convinced her to remove. He praises Pratisarā as 'mother of the world' (*jagadmātar*), 'genetrix of living beings' (*jagatām prasūh*), 'mother' (*janani*), 'protectress' (*pālinī*), etc. Already of renunciate disposition, Rāhula has no wish for (re)birth, but longs for it in order to escape the hell of the womb (*garbhaniraya*). The narrator informs us that Rāhula recalls his previous births (*smṛtah pūrvavivāsakam*), which may explain his ability to compose in long metres. In his hymn (*stuti, stotra*), Rāhula extols the goddess as affording protection against falling off cliffs and into oceans and fires, against the dangers of enemies and poison as well as granting power and wealth¹⁴. He also describes her as granting release to her devotees (*bhaktadattāpavargā*), as the sole path to liberation (*mokṣalābhāikamārga*) and identifies her with Vajrasattva (*vajrasattvāmikā*). For his part, Rāhula promises the goddess he shall refrain from such actions which will cause the 'ten incarnations' (*dāśāvatāra*¹⁵) to dwell in the hell of the womb

ced dākinimatagāpi vā / bhasmasāt karaṇiyāśu dāvagninā tarur yathā // ihājanma
kṛtam naiva daśākuśalam mayā / pratyur vratānucāriṇyā maitryābhīyuktayo Jane
// tena satyena rakṣā syāt patatyā mama pāvake / yato vismayate lokān tathā
sarvaiḥ pramānyate // kiṁ tu janānām tat karma sakalam mayi pacayu / yena
kṛśānupatanam bhavet tīvra<m> praddhikam // athavā kriyatām mā tad yasmin
duḥkhaparamparā / yena ṣadvarsaparyantam garbhinijanasamśayā // drṣṭvā
mamedr̄śim piḍām striyah samṛāsavikalāḥ / pāpam mā caratājīvan tad eva
duḥkhakṛd yataḥ // mama satyaprabhāvena pranidhānavāsaena ca / nirātanā
janāḥ sarve prāpnuvantv apavargakam // iti pranidhim ādhāya nyapataj
jātavedasi / janānām aśrupatena sāñjalir hasitānā // VI.197-112 (Ce 58b6-59a7).

14 pratisare amarādyaiḥ pūjītām tvām nato 'smi pratipadajanarakṣākāriṇīm
sarvakālam / bhrgudahanasamudrāpātaduḥkhe surakṣām ripuviṣabhyahartrīm
rājyabhogyādikartrīm // VI.125 (Ce 59b6-7).

15 CeN gloss this term by listing the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu.

and vows that by purifying his thoughts he shall achieve awakening (*bodhi*) so that in this world the 'protection' (*surakṣā*) may be available whereby beings may attain *kaivalya*¹⁶.

'Then through the goddess's power and that of truth and Dharma that raging fire spontaneously became cool'¹⁷. Six *upajāti* verses follow, celebrating the miracle of fire into water, the goddess's power, Gopā's virtue and power, etc. (VI.137-143 [Ce 60b3-7]), and following these, eleven *vasantatilakā* verses in which animate and inanimate nature, humans and gods celebrate Yaśodharā's holiness, power, devotion to her husband, etc. (VI.144-154 [Ce 60b7-61b3]).

Eleven *upajāti* verses (VI.155-165 [Ce 61b3-62a3]) continue the praise. Various citizens of Kapilavastu describe Yaśodharā and Sarvārthasiddha as the ideal holy couple to whom people owe their happiness and the kingdom its prosperity. One onlooker declares: 'Your power transcends the human; indeed, I regard you as Parameśvari, born as a woman to bring salvation to the people and make known the truth of the excellent Dharma'¹⁸. The Dharmasvāmin episode is recalled. Kapilavastu is praised as 'the glorious city, like unto heaven, in which were born a couple, emanations of the Buddhas, whose religious observance is truth[fulness] and who are endowed with forbearance and skilled in concentration'¹⁹. Yaśodharā is now invited to return to the city to see Gautamī.

16 prabhavati na kariseye karma etādr̄śam nu udaranārakavāsam yena
dāśāvatāram / satataśubhasucetāḥ sādhayiṣyāmi bodhim kṛtajagati surakṣā yena
kaivalyaprāptiḥ // VI.135 (Ce 60b1-2). Kaivalya is not a specifically Buddhist
term. In the BKA, which is much influenced by Hindu *purānic* traditions, it is
a synonym for *mokṣa, nirvāṇa, apavarga*, etc.

17 atha devyāḥ prabhāvena tat satyadharma-yos tathā / svabhāvāt tāpakaḥ
sognih śītavam agamat tataḥ // VI.137 (Ce 60b3).

18 tvam mānuṣākrāntaparākramāsi manye kila tvām paramēśvariti / lokān
samuddhartum tīvraśījanmat [mānuṣi in marg. G69a2] saddharma-satyam ca
prakāśitum tat // VI.160 (Ce 61b-67).

19 vayam sabhāgyāḥ sakalārthayuktāḥ śrīmat pure svarganibhe prajātāḥ / yatre
prajātau sugatāvatārau satyavratau kṣantiśamādhiyuktau // VI.162 (Ce 61b7-62a1).

In the five remaining verses, two in *śārdūlavikrīdita* metre²⁰, three again in *vasantatilakā* (VI.168-170 [Ce 62a5-b1]), praise verges on apotheosis. Yaśodharā is compared to the goddess, Perfect Wisdom. 'On a circle of wind rests one of fire; on that, one of water; on that, one of earth in the centre of which stands the golden mountain of the gods who dwell on its slopes. On that mountain, on a beautiful throne glittering with jewels, lotuses and moons, sits Prajñāpāramitā, mother of the Buddhas, the Eternal. Gopā is like her, [but seated] in the beautiful Lumbinī Grove: from the fire [has arisen] a pond whose cool waters are filled with eight-petalled lotuses and on a throne atop a golden lotus Yaśodharā sits, shining with the power of truth, as the gods joyously worship her by throwing exquisite flower-garlands²¹. All human, animal and vegetable life erupt into celebration; seated on her lotus-throne, Gopā accepts their joyous homage as a goddess receives offerings (*prasāda*), all the while bearing the Three Jewels and her husband in her heart and reflecting on Devadatta's claim that Sarvārthasiddha will return.

In Ch.VII, 'Gopā is Cast from a Precipice' (*gopābhṛgu-pātana*), the rage Devadatta feels at Yaśodharā's safety and the devotion accorded her begins to destroy his health. After a short homily on the effects of anger, the narrator describes Devadatta as the poison (*hālāhala*) in the ocean that is the Śākyā clan into which has been born that moon, Sarvārthasiddha (VII.1-13 [Ce 62b2-63a2]).

Devadatta then renews his campaign against Yaśodharā with new accusations made before the Śākyā assembly (*sabhā*). Once again, he claims to quote from a letter sent to him by the prince.

This time he has Sarvārthasiddha writing that Gopā is an expert in Śaiva black magic (*aghoramātrapāragā*), that he has witnessed her meetings with female demons (*dākīnī, asrapā*), that for fear of being eaten he will not return home until she is dead, that her amulet (*raksā kāpi suyantritā*) enabled her to suppress the fire and block the sight of the spectators and, finally, that this information should be reported to Dandapāni and Yaśodharā delivered up for punishment to the regent (*rājyadhūrvaha*). Devadatta pronounces himself satisfied by the evidence, adding that Gopā has mastered the magic called Indra's Net (*indrajālavidyā*), through the power of which she is able instantaneously to penetrate solid earth, fly, suppress fire and produce water, or create an embryo and all the stages of gestation. Devadatta also mentions in passing that it is only through Gopā's sorcery that the ignorant Sarvārthasiddha was able to defeat him in the exhibition of the manly arts. The problem, as he puts it, is to choose an appropriate course of action, for, he claims, while Yaśodharā herself is immune to magic (*mantrābh्यासाधर्षणीया*), she possesses the power to overcome them all (VII.14-32 [Ce 63a2-b4]).

Devadatta then reiterates his reluctance to carry out a task for which he is only condemned and again blames it all on the king, whose word is law and whose mind, he suggests, has been affected by the anxiety over his son. Overcome by anger, Devadatta faints. On regaining consciousness, he issues to the chamberlain what he says are Suddhodana's orders: 'Place Yaśodharā, bound, in a basket, and cast her into the ocean; throw her violently from a high mountain path into the deep'²² (VII.33-41 [Ce 63b4-64a2]).

20 These two verses lacking in Ca.

21 *vāyor maṇḍala vahni maṇḍala jalām tatrāvani maṇḍalam tanmadhye kanakācalah sumanasām yasyālayah sānuṣu / tasmin ratnasarojacandravilasallālīty am āśāditā prajñāpāramitā prasūr bhagavatām āśid anādyantakā // tadvat sundaralumbinīvanavane vahnes taṭāgopari cāṣṭāṅgaiḥ paripūrnato yaśiśire sauvarṇapadmopari / paryāṅkāsanam āśritā vilasate satyaprabhāvānvitā devair muktasupuṣpamālyalalitair arcāyamāṇā mudā // VI.166-167 (Ce 62a3-5).*

22 *maṇjuṣe sthāpayitvaināṁ bandhitāṁ pātayo dadhau / prapāta mārgato 'gāḍhe proccād aitarāṁ gireḥ // VII.39 (Ce 63b7-64a1).*

Most of the people react with fear and loathing, although some have their doubts (*samśayam āpannāḥ*). Those devoted to truth (*satyātmikāḥ*), who are confident of Gopā's power, assert that she transformed fire into water neither by a miracle (*āścarya*) nor by magic (*indrajālabhāvatā*), but rather by the power of truth (*satyānubhāva*). On the one hand, they point out Devadatta's evil character and motives²³; on the other, denying that people should be astonished at Gopā's powers, they ask: 'Have you not listened to wise men's descriptions of the earth? Resting on a disc of air is one of fire and on that a lotus on which rests the disc that is the earth; on that rests Mount Meru and on its peak sits she who is known as "Supreme Goddess". Did Yaśodharā not appear like that just now? Was water not produced from fire?'²⁴ Then, turning to Yaśodharā, they assure her that the deities of truth (*satyadevāḥ*) are protecting her and request her to perform further acts which glorify the Dharma. Listening to this, the women in attendance are inspired, vowing to Gopā that they shall henceforth cleave to Truth and Dharma (VII.42-63 [Ce 64a2-65a7]).

Meanwhile, Devadatta despatches the weeping chamberlain to announce the latest sentence of death to Yaśodharā, who is still seated on the 'lotus-throne' (*kamalāsana*). The princess calmly accepts the sentence, urges the chamberlain to quell Devadatta's anger by carrying it out, and tells him not to blame her father-in-law or Sarvārthasiddha. She again attributes her circumstances to her own karma and assures the chamberlain that he is no more than its innocent instrument (VII.64-73 [Ce 64b6-65a4]).

23 *durmātir devadatto 'sau iṣyālur naigunātmakah / rājyasya hetor akaror pāpaṇ karma pralobhataḥ* // VII.55 (Ce 64b2).

24 *śrūyate kim na bhūgolakathā vidvatsamāhṛīḥ // vāyumandalam āśinah krśānus tatra puṣkaram / bhūmaṇḍalam tadupari tatrāpi mermaṇḍalam // tacchirasi samāśinā prameśvarīti viśrutā / tadvid evādhunā jātā cāgneḥ kim na jalambhavam* // VII.56c-58d (Ce 62b2-4; G 72a5-7. In CuCeGNTd, both nouns in 56cd are in acc.; GNTd read *bhūpāla*^o for *bhūgola*^o; in 58d, Ce reads *jalambhave*, GNTd *jalahavam* (unm.).

His victim's equanimity both increases Devadatta's anger and shames him. As before, he attempts to protect himself by anticipating that Yaśodharā may survive and by complaining that he suffers infamy for obeying his king and Yaśodharā's own husband. Finally, Devadatta challenges Gopā to declare her 'earnest resolve of truth' (*satyapraṇidhi*) and take her place in the basket without being bound and of her own free will²⁵. Yaśodharā responds by invoking 'the compassionate one' (*dayākula*), i.e. the Buddha, and announcing her readiness. Preceded by Devadatta, the princess, her attendants and the citizenry soon arrive at the lakeshore (VII.80-83 [Ce 65a7-b2]).

At this juncture the narrator, Upagupta, addresses Aśoka, his interloctor: 'As if to awaken the people, just then that pellucid lake, which is known as "The Lake of Truth", became perfectly calm. Even now, King Aśoka, at that place the Lake of Truth radiates enormous merit: imbued with purifying ambrosia, it grants final release, allays fevers, cures leprosy and destroys the sin of false speech'²⁶.

Devadatta climbs the steep path to the top of the precipice and gazes down at what is from now on described as the ocean (*samudra, mahodadhi, sāgara*). The frightful scene — lines of trees obscuring the light of sun and moon, black abyss split by

25 *tasyā vāṇīm iti śrutvā dvigunam kopavardhitah / kīmcillajjayamāno 'sau pratyuttaram adād iti // satyam satyavrataḥ cet tvam jīvasi rahitavraṇā / tpatatādīt bhṛgupātena sindhau śvāsuryaśāsanāt // sarvam dharmam adharman vā bhūpe patyau tathā tava / mayy etad duryaśah kim tu lokanīdā mahattarām // lokāpavādato bhīto mām ayojoyad atra sah / viśvastam sarvakāryeṣu putrasaṃgamalālasah // bhāgyavanto yadi vayam tava rakṣā bhavisyati / pativratāyāś tatrāpi yathā sarasi pāvake // tasmān mañjuṣam āsthāya patasvāktam atantrakā / satyapraṇidhim ādhāya parīkṣye<i>tvaḥprabhāvaiḥ // VII.74-79 (Ce 65a4-7).*

26 *lokam prabodhitum iva tat sarovara<m> nirmalam / tatraiva sthiratām āpa satyasara<m> iti śrutam // adyāpi bhūpate 'śoka tatra satyasarovaram / virājate punyatamam apavargaphalapradam // pāvakāṁṛitasamīśram dāhaśītāpramocakam / kuṣṭavyādhiharam satyam mithyābhāṣapāpaham // VII.84-86 (Ce 65b2-3).*

flashes of lightning, waves crashing, waters swarming with aquatic monsters, beach strewn with stones — puts him in mind of the netherworlds (*pātāla*). Feigning concern for the princess's life, he has the basket cushioned with masses of leaves and flowers (*prastarādi*) and placates his men with the thought that should Gopā survive, the king will surely honour her as a faithful, devoted wife (*pativrata*), but even if she dies in the sea, she will go to heaven (*urdhvam vrajiṣyati* [VII.87-102; Ce 65b3-66a3]).

Though with child and gaunt from her ascetic diet, strengthened by meditation and her other religious practices, Yaśodharā ascends the mountain. Regarding her own sufferings with perfect equanimity, her only concern is the exhaustion and discomfort of her entourage. Then the saintly woman (*sati*) reaches the precipice, where the malevolent Devadatta awaits her (VII.103-110 [Ce 66a3-b1]).

We view again the frightful scene at the bottom of the precipice, this time from the perspective of Yaśodharā's ladies-in-waiting. Though compared to Rasātala, it is like a scene from one of the hells: the shore, strewn with boulders and menaced by sea-monsters (*timiṅgala*), lies more than a *yojana* below; on it stones are scattered about like razor-sharp blades; the dessicated trees resemble a forest of tridents. It is like a place of departed spirits (*pitravana*) thronged with vampire-demons (*gahvarāsrapa*). Vines cling to the ground, as if the earth herself were caught in Yama's noose. The very rocks appear like hell-beings impaled on stakes for their evil deeds, the uprooted trees like drowned men (VII.111-119 [Ce 66b1-5]).

The women then discuss their mistress's likely fate (VII.119-130 [Ce 66b1-67a3]), with she who has the last word insisting 'Certainly she will be saved, even from falling into the ocean, by her own spiritual power. Doubt it not'²⁷. Garments billowing in the wind, they gaze downward expectantly.

²⁷ *tasyā nūnam bhaved rakṣā patatyā api sāgare / svasukrtānubhāvena tiṣṭhadhvam apasamśayāḥ // VII.129 (Ce 67a2).*

However, since Devadatta, fearing public censure (*lokā-pavādabhititah*), does not respond to Gopā's demand that she be bound and placed in the basket, she climbs in herself. Then, as she begins to make her vow (*pratijñātum upaca<?n>kramate*), the basket breaks into hundreds of pieces from the force of her adamantine body (VII.131-135 [Ce 67a3-6]). Finally, Yaśodharā, slightly embarrassed at this unintentional display of spiritual power, faces east and proclaims her vow in three *śragdhāra* and one *śārdūlavikrīdita* verse:

Homage to the Buddha! To [him who], in his triplexity, [manifests] the Glorious Three Jewels, I pay homage. He possesses the three qualities, dispels fear of the three impurities²⁸, is to be approached for knowledge of the three times²⁹ and destroys the three fears³⁰; he possesses three bodies³¹ and is lord of Samsāra's three realms³². With his divine eye thrice daily surveying the men and women of the triple world³³, he offers succour to those without succour. To him who is [father and] teacher to the thirty[-three gods] as well as to mortals, with his own three circles of deities³⁴ I pay homage.

Due to the disposition of my karma, I shall plummet from this mountain path into the stygian depths of the great ocean, a place of merit, which is bordered by stands of trees and which, full of monsters, one enters with

²⁸ *rāga* (lust), *dveṣa* (hatred) *māyā* (delusion [for the more usual *moha*]) in marg. G 75b.

²⁹ *trikāla*: past, present and future.

³⁰ *janma* (birth), *jarā* (old age), *mṛtyu* (death) in marg. G 75b, N 70b.

³¹ *mahāsukhaśkāya* ('Supreme Bliss Body'), *sambhogakāya* ('Enjoyment Body'), *nirmāṇakāya* ('Transformation Body') in marg. N 70b. On these terms, see P. Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, London 1989, pp.175-81; D. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, 2 vols, Boston 1987, pp.115-16, 250-1; D.N. Gellner, *Monk, Householder and Tantric Priest*, Cambridge 1992, pp.293-4.

³² *tribhava* *kāmadhātu* (Desire Realm), *rūpadhātu* (Realm of Form), *ārūpya-dhātu* (Formless Realm).

³³ The heavenly, terrestrial and nether worlds.

³⁴ On the three *mandalas* used in the Newar Eighth-Day Observance (*astamivratā*), see J. Locke, 'The Upoṣadha Vrata of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara in Nepal', *L'Ethnographie* 83 (100-1), Paris 1987, pp.159-89.

trepidation. I am a companion of Truth, carry a child in my womb and long to serve my husband: I know nothing of the Śaiva magic which grants whatever one wishes and nothing of evil desires³⁵.

In the third *śragdharā* verse, Yaśodharā proclaims that if fear of her has nothing to do with her husband becoming an ascetic and if she bears no rancour in her heart towards Devadatta, then 'by this truth may all the Lokanāthas protect my son'³⁶. The *sārdūlavikrīḍita* verse completes the vow:

May the sin of all men and women who seek to cast themselves from cliffs mature in me; and thus, from this day forth, whenever such people do so, may they always attain the incomparable enjoyment of the divine realms, the draught of immortality and, in the end, honour the lotus-feet of the Buddha(s) which grant liberation³⁷.

Three additional *śragdharā* verses describe the plunge: Entering into meditation on her husband and the goddess (Pratisarā), Yaśodharā leaps into the abyss. Her gentle spiralling descent is compared to a female *garuda* sportively circling down from the sky; the supernormal power of her truthfulness and other virtues keeps her aloft, as its shining feathers does a *garuda*. Eventually,

35 *traitatvam traigunādhyam trimalabhayaharam śrītriratnam namāmi traikāla-jñānagamyam trividhabhayaharam triabhavesam trikāyan || railoke striś ca pūmsas trisamayadivasam divyadrṣṭyā vilokya<m> traīṇam trānaprahiṇā<m>s tridaśanaragurum maṇḍalaḥ svais tribhīḥ sā // karmādhānāt patiṣye mahati jala-nidhau sānumārgena punye yādobhir bhimagamye tarunikaravṛte sāndrataimiryagādhe / satyāli t-satritiyāt jaṭharaśiṣyutā bhartṛsevābhilāṣā nābhijñāghoramantram tv abhimataphaladam naiva pāpam ca lobham // VII.136-137 (Ce 67a6-bl; G 75b3-6).*

36 *bhimām dṛṣṭvā tathā māṁ yadi tapasi gato nāpi bhartā mamāsau kiṁ cāmin devadatte satatam apakrtau (apahṛtau v.1.) roṣacintākulā na / satyenaitena sarve (°va, °vam v.1.) bhavatu (°ta v.1.) mama tanūrakṣino loka-nāthāḥ [All MSS lack one pāda] VII.138 (Ce 67b1-2; G 75b6-7).*

37 *kālasyam mayi pacyatām bhṛgutaṭāt pātiṣṇu pūmsaḥ striyah adyārabhya kadā cid ittham athavā kurvanti pātam bhṛgoḥ / te sarve suralokabhogam asamām piyūṣapānam sadā labdh<v>ānte sugatāṅghripañkajayugam vandanu moksapradam // VIII.139 (Ce 67b2-3; G 75b7-76a2).*

she lands gently and unharmed in a large sea-cave. Terrified by what they mistake for a *garuda*, to them a deadly predator, the *nāgas*, crocodiles, sharks and other denizens of the deep hide or flee (VII.140-142 [Ce 67b3-7]).

Fifteen *upajāti* verses depict the aftermath. In the first seven (VII.143-149 [Ce 67b7-68a4]), Devadatta, inwardly rejoicing but outwardly weeping fraudulent tears, declares that Yaśodharā's demise proves she is not protected by Truth and Dharma, but rather bears out Sarvārthaśiddha's claim that his wife is an adulteress and practitioner of Śaiva black magic, and justifies the king's sentence of death. He then instructs the weeping officials and citizens to return to the city to await the prince's return.

Meanwhile, an ape-king (*vānarendra, plavāṅgādhipati*) named Dharmasuvallabha, perched in a *salara* tree eating fruit, catches sight of Gopā. He politely approaches and offers some of the fruit. Yaśodharā informs him of her identity and acquaints him with her circumstances. Observing she is unscathed, he extols the supernormal power of truth (*satyānubhāva*) which preserved her. He then swims with her back to the shore and carries her through the trees back to the precipice, where he sets her down before the citizens of Kapilavastu. Then, with many a prostration, he proclaims his faith in Yaśodharā and rejoices in the merit he has acquired (VIII.150-157 [Ce 68a4-b3]).

The metre returns to *anuṣṭubh*. Astonished at her re-appearance and overjoyed that she is unharmed, the princess's subjects praise the great power of her truthfulness (*nijasatyānu-bhāva*); their laudations redouble when she recounts her experience. Devadatta feigns joy as before he feigned grief. While inwardly resolving to gouge out Dharmasuvallabha's eyes, chop off his hands and feet and cast him into the gorge, he invites Yaśodharā to the royal palace. She finds this hypocrisy unbearable but, choosing to ignore Devadatta's posturing, joyfully returns to the city. For his part, Devadatta, driven almost mad by the frustration of his grand ambitions, comes close to throwing himself in the ocean (VIII.158-167 [Ce 68b3-69a1]).

As she enters the Ratnavyūha Palace, the maidens of the city sing Gopā's praise and honour her by scattering parched grain.

There she recounts the entire episode to Gautamī and continues with her religious practice. The chapter closes with the queen rejoicing for her daughter-in-law, but still longing for her son (VIII.169-171 [Ce 69a1-3]).

In Ch.VIII, 'Yaśodharā's Glory is Brought to Light' (*yaśodharāyaśahprakāśana*), Upagupta, described as 'so like a Buddha, lord among arhats', again addresses Aśoka: 'Now she who was the best among those devoted to truth practised her Observance as before, [but] longed for the sight of her lord, and hankered to learn of his activities'³⁸.

Meanwhile, as the twenty-one days of his regency draw to a close, Devadatta considers that Destiny has thwarted his grand project. He experiences a moment of remorse but, as mounting anxiety over the king's anticipated wrath begins to propel him into the madness he had been feigning all along, he begins to fantasise anew that success will yet be his³⁹ (VIII.3-9 [Ce 69a5-b1]).

The three weeks come to a close and, contrary to Devadatta's earlier promises, there is no sign of Sarvārthaśiddha or of his son. Moreover, when the king learns that Devadatta has failed to report Gopā's astonishing demonstrations of truthfulness, fidelity and spiritual power, he angrily sentences the erstwhile regent to suffer the same trials he has inflicted upon Yaśodharā (VIII.10-18 [Ce 69b16]).

Terrified, the weeping Devadatta defends himself with what have become his standard lies: that Yaśodharā escaped death through her skill in black magic (*aghoramanttra*), not through the power of Dharma and Truth and that Sarvārthaśiddha will not return so long as his wife remains in the palace. The villain also thinks to add that he could never survive such trials as he

³⁸ *athābravīd upaguptah śrūyatām iti bhūpate / pārṣāṇganam samālokyā jinakalpo 'rhatām patiḥ // tataḥ satyāmanām śresthā prākarot pūrvavād vratam / tatkarmaśravaṇākānsī patidarśanālālasā // VIII.1-2* (Ce 69a4-5). There is some ambiguity in verse 2d: it could mean 'hankering to know her destiny'.

³⁹ *patiṣyati nirālambā mama hasteva sā (read *haste vaśad?*) dhruvam / suyatnavantam mām eva rājalakṣmīs tathāśrayet // VIII.8* (Ce 69a7-b1).

inflicted upon Gopā simply because he has no demons (*paiśaca*) helping him. Finally, he suggests that even if he were guilty, the king should pardon him (VIII.19-24 [Ce 69b6-70a2]).

Śuddhodana insists that his nephew shall have the same opportunities as his daughter-in-law to demonstrate innocence and virtue. When the terrified Devadatta faints at his feet, the king cheerfully observes that no one sees fit to take pity on the evildoer (VIII.24-39 [Ce 70a1-b2]).

Learning of the king's decision, Yaśodharā, 'her heart overflowing with compassion' (*naisargakarunāśayā*), rushes to plead for clemency (VIII.40-48 [CE 70b2-6]), her plea taking the form of a paean to forbearance (*kṣamā*):

'Victorious is he who under all circumstances practises forbearance: he is worshipped even by the gods. The body is protected by forbearance as is the earth by abundant rain. It was forbearance which protected me when I descended into water and fire. For forbearance is the mother of truth and truth is the protector of all'⁴⁰.

She adds that a king rules through the power of righteousness (*dharmānubhāva*) and that such righteousness is the son of compassion (*karuṇātmaja*).

Śuddhodana, astonished that the much-wronged Gopā, whom the narrator here likens to the Goddess of Eloquence, Sarasvatī (*vāgdevī . . . sarasvatī*), should defend her persecutor, argues that, as king, the law (*nīti*) requires him to punish such criminals as Devadatta (VIII.49-56 [Ce 70b6-71a3]). Yaśodharā warns Śuddhodana that he is giving in to hatred (*dvesa*) which will lead to rebirth in hell. She then argues that Devadatta was the instrument of her own karma, that she only suffered the consequences of deeds she herself had committed in previous births. To clinch this argument, she reveals her husband's prediction: she will suffer a

⁴⁰ *jayah (jayati CaCe) kṣamāvān sarvatra pūjyate cāmarair api / kṣamayā rakṣyate mūrtih suvr̥ṣṭyā iva medini // tayaiva mama rakṣābhūt patatyā jalapāvake / kṣamā hi satyajanāni satyāḥ sarvasya rakṣakah // VIII.43-44* (Ce 70b3-4).

six-year pregnancy as well as falling into fire, but will be delivered from the latter by the practice of forbearance⁴¹. Gopā also warns the king against failing for the second time to take her at her word (VIII.57-72 [Ce 7la4-bl; G 80a5-b6⁴²]).

Śuddhodana, won over, praises his daughter-in-law, guarantees her future safety and further demonstrates his wholehearted acceptance of her instruction by performing the Poṣadha Observance, which he concludes by wishing for the speedy return of his son. He then grants Devadatta one chance to learn from Yaśodharā's example and reform himself. The wretch prostrates himself before king and princess, promises to transgress no more and quickly takes his leave. Then, to everyone's astonishment, Śuddhodana himself bows down to his daughter-in-law⁴³ (VIII.73-84 [Ce 7lb1-7; G 80b5-8la6⁴⁴]).

Learning of these events rouses Queen Gautamī from her grief. She leads her subjects in glorifying Yaśodharā and reviling Devadatta. The populace, realising that karma is indeed a serious matter, begin to emulate Gopā's religious commitment by meditating on the Three Jewels, practising forbearance and moral discipline and generally cultivating Dharma with great seriousness⁴⁵

41 *putravākyam śṛṇu tathā mām iti proktavān asau / śadvatsaraparyantam gurviṇī duḥkham āpsyasi // vītihotrādipatanam kṣamayā proddhariṣyate / trikālajñasya sūnos tad vacanam kim mrṣā bhavet // VIII.71-72* (Ce 7la7-bl).

42 VIII.59c-64d lacking in Ce.

43 *pratyāgacchatv asau tūrṇam iti kṛtvā vratottamam / mā viṣida sukham
tiṣṭha gope 'dyārabhya nirbhaya // durātman vraja bhīrus tvam ekavāram tatah
sahe<h> / bhūyo 'paradhyasi yadi nūnam viyogaṁ apsyasi // śrutiṁ votad
yaśodevyā śravaṇīyam vacas tvayā / smaryate vā tathā paścad duḥprajñā-
hitacetasa // ity uktamātra utthaya natvāṅghrikamalam tayoh / punar naivā-
parādhyāmi proktveti tvaritam yayau // mocayitvā vadhyuktam vanditvā
tatpadambujam / satyān vismāpayan (°yat codd.) sarvān pratyāgamat svam
ālayam // VIII.81-85 (Ce 7lb5-7; G 8la4-6).*

44 VIII.77c-80b lacking in Ce.

45 *durlāṅghyam karmatām matvā smṛtvā ratnatrayam param / kṣamā-
śilasamāyuktāḥ saddharmam abhyasādhayan (°yat codd.) // VIII.89* (Ce 72al).

(VIII.85-88 [Ce 7lb7-72a1]).

Despite the king's warning, only Devadatta, because of his nature (*svabhāvataḥ*), takes no pleasure in these new developments: he does not go for refuge and indeed continues to revile Yaśodharā even as his own relatives revile him for so doing, even as he continues to search for a way to get at her (*chidrānvesaṇatpara*)⁴⁶.

Yaśodharā masters her grief over Sarvārthasiddha's continuing absence by emulating his ascetic practice (*bhartus tapo 'nukāriṇī*); Śuddhodana by glorifying his holy daughter-in-law (*māhātamyaṁ varnayāms tasyāḥ*) and occupying himself with the affairs of government (*nityābhyapālāyan mahim*). Gautamī alone, unable to bear up (*putraśokasahiṣṇukā*), passes each day weeping. In vain are the king's attempts to comfort his queen; equally vain his warnings that, blinded by incessant weeping, she will be unable to look upon her son when, Awakened, he returns 'for the Lumbinī Grove Festival' (*lumbinīvanayātrārtha*)⁴⁷. But in the extremity of her grief, Gautamī is unreachable: 'I long for the sight of my son as a courtesan hankers after money'⁴⁸. Eventually, she declares to Śuddhodana that unless he can bring their son home, he had best turn his attention to affairs of state and leave her to grieve (VIII.92-112 [Ce 72a3-b5; G 8lb4-82b2]).

Gautamī's challenge, one he cannot meet, silences the king; indeed, he ceases speaking to his wife altogether. The grief-stricken queen passes her days weeping, further damaging her eyes. Śuddhodana remains devoted to his royal duties, but also spends much time reviewing reports about Sarvārthasiddha and

46 VIII.90-92 (Ce 72a1-3).

47 In the Nepal Valley, the festival celebrating the Buddha's birth at Lumbini is called the Lumbinīyātrā (Newārī: *lumbinījātrā*) For a song on this topic, see S. Lienhard (ed. and tr.), *Nevārigitimañjari*, Stockholm 1974, pp.37, 129. Cf. Gellner, *op. cit.*, pp.96-7, 356 n.35. The song published by Lienhard (composed in 1864) appears to derive from the *Bṛhatśvayambhūpurāṇa* (ed. H.P. Sastri, Calcutta 1894-1900, 24⁹ ff.) but is also very close to BKA XXVI.304-309 (Ce 218a6-b2).

48 *sūnusāndarśanākārikṣi gaṇikeva dhanārthini* VIII.111ed (Ce 72b5).

praying to the goddess Abhayā ('Safety')⁴⁹ that his son may return and his grandson be born quickly and without mishap. Husband and wife go on this way until six years after the prince's departure have elapsed. During this period Yaśodharā remains in seclusion, dedicating her religious observance to her husband's return. The citizens, too, practise Dharma in his name (VIII.114-119 [Ce 72b5-73a2]).

In Ch.IX, 'Yaśodharā's Son is Born' (*yaśodharāputrajanana*), the narrative explicitly links Yaśodharā's life in Kapilavastu with Sarvārthasiddha's by the Nairājanā River:

Now at the end of six years, the Omniscient, ending his severe ascetic observances, accepted the milk-rice porridge offered by Sujātā. [Meanwhile], in the Ratnavyūha Palace, Yaśodharā gave birth to a son. He was frightful as the [demon Rāhu], son of Simhikā; of hideous complexion, like a black mottled bean⁵⁰.

Yaśodharā's terror at the hairy, black, goggle-eyed dwarf child thirstily fastening itself to her breast is compared to that of the moon seized by the demon Rāhu⁵¹. Indeed quite overcome, the princess faints dead away.

Among descriptions of the newborn and Yaśodharā's reaction to his deformity, the narrator, Upagupta, offers two, apparently contradictory, comments: first, that the Buddha has fathered this

49 This is the same goddess who bows down to the infant Sarvārthasiddha when Śuddhodana presents him to her at the temple (Mv II.26³⁻¹¹, ŚBc 52). The parallel scene in the Lalitavistara (ed. S. Tripathi, Darbhanga 1987, p.92¹⁷⁻²²) does not mention this particular deity. See also E.J. Thomas, *The Life of Buddha*, London 1927, Delhi 1993, p.46; A. Foucher, *La vie du Bouddha*, Paris 1949, 1987, pp.53-7.

50 *atha ṣadvatsarātite samāpya duṣkaram vratam / samāharat sa sarvajñah sujātādattapāyasaṁ // ratnavyūhaniṣadīnyā tayā putram asūyata / simhikeyanibho bhīmo durvarṇo kālamāśavat // IX.1-2* (Ce 73a3-4).

51 *jātamātre stanam dhṛtvā mātu<h> stanyam papau svayam / ṣadabda-garbhām āśināḥ pipāṣāpiḍitas tarām // kanakakalaśākāre gopāpiṇapayodhare / bālasya hastāṅgulayo nīlalekhā ivābabhau // tasya bhīmamukham dṛṣṭyā śyāmam vartulalocanam / sasakhi prābibhīn (read °bhet?) mātā svarbhānum iva kaumudi // IX.5-7* (Ce 73a5-6).

hideous child as part of his larger plan to lead evildoers to salvation⁵²; second, that in his eagerness to do his work, Destiny is like a hasty painter who astonishes everyone with his distorted representations⁵³.

Gopā anticipates public disgrace for presenting the comely Śākyas with such a hideous heir-apparent; she blames wicked deeds in previous births, both her own and the child's; she worries that her abstemious diet prevented proper foetal development; she fears showing the boy to Śuddhodana and feels certain that once he knows of his son, Sarvārthasiddha will never return. Even after all her trials, Upagupta comments, Yaśodharā must bear this, due to karma (IX.11-25 [Ce 73b1-74a1]).

After glimpsing the child, the other palace women make excuses to leave. Yaśodharā ignores Gautamī's manifestly insincere consolations that the king will be overjoyed to have an heir and that, like his father, her son is unique (*trailokyadurlabha*). As before, she acknowledges the supremacy of destiny, the ineluctability of karmic retribution, her own misdeeds in previous births: this time, however, no prediction has prepared her and there is no inkling of a solution. All her trials appear to have been for naught. For the first time she cries out that the cosmic order be unjust. Yet for all this, Gopā insists that she and Gautamī must care well for the child, for he will destroy accumulated past karma⁵⁴ (IX.26-39 [Ce 74a1-b1]).

Gautamī accepts Yaśodharā's demand with as little conviction as she has just offered her reassurance. She then flees to her 'chamber of mourning' (*śokāgāra*), there to bewail her own and the Śākyas' misfortune and to dread the public disgrace about to descend on the royal family. In her soliloquy she compares the

52 *kṛtyam bhagavataś citram paraduṣkarmanāśināḥ / duṣkrīn bodhitum lokāms tādrśam prābhisūyataḥ // IX.8* (Ce 73a6-7).

53 *aho sakutuki loke daivaś citrakaro yathā / yena lokān vismayate svabhāva-kutile nanu // IX.10* (Ce 73a7-b1).

54 *pālanīyo 'py (°yāpy CaCe GTd) ayam tasmat kṛtakarmakṣayamkarah / mā vimānayaniyas tu sudhiyā ca tvayā mayā // IX.39* (Ce 74a7-b1).

sight of her son's face to imbibing ambrosia, that of her grandson's to drinking poison and likens the family with Sarvārtha-siddha to a radiant full-moon night, but with Virūpa⁵⁵ to the impenetrable darkness during the dark half of the month (IX.40-51 [Ce 74b1-7]).

Then Śuddhodana, his ministers and Chandaka arrive. One look at the hideous infant and the king concurs with what he has heard people saying — that his family is a sandal-tree infested with serpents. He then leaves the lying-in chamber and faints, 'as if the child's deformity were poison with which he was smeared' (IX.51-57 [Ce 74b7-75a3]).

Upagupta comments: since most people, deluded by first impressions, accord supreme value to external beauty, and since only those who possess them (*gunin*) take time to appreciate the less obvious virtues (*antarguna*), most people are deceived by mere appearances (IX.58-59 [Ce 75a3-4]).

In the Assembly, Śuddhodana describes the Śākyas as a beautiful moon which the demon Rāhu, his grandson, is in the process of devouring. He then expatiates on the deformed child as a dynastic and political disaster and, as did Gautamī, laments the absence of his handsome son (IX.60-60 [Ce 75a4-b2]).

At this, Chandaka, Sarvārtha-siddha's squire and childhood friend, admonishes the king at length (IX.70-80 [Ce 75b2-7]). He argues that to be born the son of a man whom the gods themselves have worshipped must indicate great personal merit, as must being so unique as to have remained six years in the womb. Indeed he describes Sarvārtha-siddha's son as a deity who has taken rebirth as a deformed child, 'as if to demonstrate his spiritual power'⁵⁶.

⁵⁵ 'Deformed', 'hideous' or simply 'ugly' is the adjective which serves as Rāhula's name until his grandfather the king permits a sort of naming-ceremony to be carried out.

⁵⁶ *kim tu daivaś chalānveśi nānābhāvasurājikāḥ / tatprabhāvapratkāśarthaṁ ivābhavad virūpikāḥ // IX.73* (Ce 75b3-4).

By way of reply, Śuddhodana compares his son's physical beauty and the thirty-two bodily marks, tokens of a lofty destiny, to his grandson's deformity; he also contrasts the numerous auspicious portents which preceded and accompanied Sarvārtha-siddha's birth to their complete absence in the case of his son. The king can only imagine his grandson presiding over the Assembly as a crow among swans (IX.81-89 [Ce 75b7-76a5]).

Chandaka's response is to reveal and comment on Sarvārtha-siddha's own words. This, for the reader, amounts to a foretaste of later chapters:

After listening to the king's words, Chanda[ka] instructed (lit. 'awakened') the king further: 'Your son, the all-wise, will certainly deliver [his own son from his condition]. "Everyone I shall deliver [from suffering, including] the ugly and the unfortunate". How could one who has made that solemn vow not save his own son? Once he has attained Awakening, so difficult to realise, and learned the facts about his son, after offering succour to those he meets on the way, he will return [here] with his disciples. Touched by the radiance of his father's body, the child's deformities will disappear under brilliant moonlight, where can there be darkness? Then, seeing your grandson's face, resplendent as the full moon, you will place him on the lion-throne, Sire, and make him king. Therefore dismiss your anxiety and cherish this deformed child, the mainstay of the Śākyā family, for indeed he [will become] a handsome hero'⁵⁷.

The king, however, pays no heed to his servant's words, nor, by extension, to his son's; he is conscious only of his grandson's deformity and his own shame. Similarly, his womenfolk can only murmur about destiny and long for Saravārtha-siddha's return

⁵⁷ *niśamya tadgirām chando bodhayām āsa tam punah / tavātmajo 'sau sarvajño nūnam uddhārayiṣyati // lokān uddhārayiṣyāmi durvarṇān durbhagān iti / yena pranūhitām bhūpa (bhūpa CaCe kuryuh GTd) kathām tam sa na rakṣyati // durlabham bodhim āśādya tasya vārttām niśamya ca / mārgē kṛtvā lokarakṣām śisyaiḥ pratyāgamīṣyati // tasya dehaprabhāśprastas tadvirūpo nāśam āvrajet / kaumudyām saṃprakāśayām kutas timirasamcayah // tadā pūrnenduvad ramyām mukham paśya<?n> virājitam / simphasane pratiṣṭhāpya rājānam kuru tam nrpa // tasmād utsukatām tyajya virūpam api pālaya / yo hi śākyakulā-lambī yato rūpa ('rūpa G) hi viryavān // IX.90-95 (Ce 76a5-bl).*

(IX.96-99 [Ce76b1-3]).

Of course for Devadatta, that Yaśodharā's son, Śuddhodana's long-awaited heir, has turned out to be a deformed dwarf, is welcome news. Revenge, even political power, may yet be possible. On the pretext of offering congratulations on the birth of the new prince, he visits the king:

'The lovely, truthful Yaśodharā has borne a son rare in the three [worlds], divinely beautiful, charming to all'. So people say. But it is only when they see him to be so frightfully hideous that they speak so. However, since it is the truth, O king, listen to the reason for it. While Yaśodharā was dwelling in the *nāga*-realm among the female *nāgas*, the *nāga*-king clasped her in order to lead her up out of Rasātala. As a result, [her child] took on an exceedingly frightful appearance, like a serpent. For this reason, everyone is terrified of him, fearing they will be scorched by virulent poison. [Moreover], because he was burnt by the flames which are everywhere [in Rasātala], he is black-skinned and disfigured and because [Gopā] was carried up [from the gorgel] by the apel-king, the boy is covered with thick fur and possesses great strength⁵⁸.

Devadatta then taunts the king, claiming that his grandson will be a great warrior, endowed as he is with simian strength as well as a *nāga*'s virulence. The kingdom will enjoy unrivalled security, he promises, for even Yama's servants and other demons will flee from the frightful Śākyā monarch. Though he wishes to protest, the insult of bestial miscegenation added to the injuries of absent son and deformed grandson leave the king quite speechless. Yaśodharā and Gautamī can only weep and lament (IX.100-115 [Ce 76b3-77a4]).

Some days later, Udayana, the chief priest, asks the king to arrange for his grandson's birth-ceremony (*jātakarman*) and

58 satyā yaśodharā bhavyā prasūnot triṣu durlabham / divyātisundaram loka-
manoharam iti śrutam // sabhayam (bhayāḥ?) kim tu durvarnam paśyanta iti
bhāṣire / tat tu satyan mahipāla śryatām asya hetutām // nāgālayam upāśinā
nāganibhiḥ samanvitā / nāgenaśleṣayitvā yad unniyate rasātalaṭ // tenātibhiṣanā-
kāro viṣadhara ivābhavat / yasmāt samṛasyate lokair mahaviṣapratāpinah //
vaiśvānalapradagdhavat kālavarṇo durākṛtiḥ / markaṭārohanatayā (ropana^o?)
sthūlaromā balottamah // IX.102-106 (Ce 76b4-6).

name-giving (*nāmakarana*, *abhidhasamjñāka*)⁵⁹. Śuddhodana, fearing that such life-cycle rituals will only amplify his shame, refuses to proceed. The wise old brahman is scandalised. First he attributes the child's deformity to the king's karmic failings. He then lectures Śuddhodana: happiness and sorrow are inherent aspects of conditioned existence; life is a wheel which turns up joy, then grief, then joy again; no one in particular is to be blamed for its mechanical processes. Udayana challenges the king to name what action might have prevented the infant's deformity and enjoins him not to commit a culpable deed (i.e., denying his grandchild a civilised entry into the world) out of anger⁶⁰. Śuddhodana's response is to choose an 'appropriately meaningful name' (*nāma yāthārthyam*) for, he says, 'the edification of the people' (*lokabodhane*): he names the child Rāhula because of his 'resemblance to the demon Rāhu'⁶¹. Although Udayana is appalled at his monarch's choice of such an inauspicious name, he does

59 According to *Manusmṛti* II.29-30, the birth-ceremony should be performed before cutting the umbilical cord, and the naming ceremony, ten or twelve days after the birth.

60 tavaiva karmadoṣena virūpam samajāyata / kim tu sa daivaharsaś cec
chokāḥ kutra vasiyati // sukhaduhkhasame loke duḥkham kim na bhaviyati /
yāvad brahmāṇḍasamvartī tāvad duḥkhasukhāhataḥ // bhavacakra yathā mṛtyu-
janau vṛddhabalakau / yāvanti harsabūtāni tasmin siddhārthaḥajanmani // tāvatyā
samkhyayā rājann adhunā śkcasamcayaḥ / punas tāvanti sauκhyāni na
bhaviyanti kim punaḥ // kim na budhyasi rājendra samsāraparivartanam / tatra
kim doṣata tasya tathāsmākam mahipate // avi<c>chinnavirittasya cakrasyaiva
svabhāvata / śokāhato pi tatkarma na katham kārayisyasi / akṛtvā kim bhavec
chuddhaḥ sūto 'śuddho mṛtād api / mā kāraya doṣakarma (dāśa^o CaCe: doṣa^o G)
tvam ced roṣakulāśayah // IX.121-127 (Ce 77a6-78a3).

61 Since in the BKA the Buddha's son is born a deformed dwarf, it is not surprising that only in the BKA do we find this explanation for his name. By contrast, in the Theravādin Jātaka (ed. Fausbøll, London 1877, Oxford 1990, I.60²⁰⁻²³), 'Rāhula' is explained as 'fetter'; in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (SBV II.31⁴⁻⁸), the explanation is that the birth occurred during a lunar eclipse, i.e., when the demon Rāhu attempts to swallow the moon.

perform a brief rite of purification (IX.116-134 [Ce 77a4-b6].

Time passes, Rāhula grows, but is kept out of sight. The narrator reflects on the power of deeds over ancestry and poses questions which he does not answer: where is Sarvārthaśiddha? Why has he inflicted such a grandson on his father? Why is Rāhula so hideous? (IX.135-141 [Ce 77b6-78a3]).

Gautamī, now completely blind, apostrophises Sarvārthaśiddha at length (IX.142-160 [Ce 78a3-b6]). Convinced that by now he must have attained Awakening, she entreats him to hasten home to deliver her from blindness, Rāhula from deformity, the king from sorrow and grief and Yaśodharā, who 'emulates your austerities' (*tvadvratānucari*), from terrible pain. Without his return, the queen declares, the faculty of hearing and then the very life-breath (*prāṇa*) will forsake her body; with it she will imbibe the Saddharma and attain liberation.

The weeping Śuddhodana tells Gautamī that she is fortunate in her blindness, for her eyes can no longer experience the torment of looking upon their hideous grandson. Assuring her that, on his return, their son will restore her sight, the king laments his own ocular acuity and longs to share the queen's blindness until such time as Rāhula may possess signs of beauty (IX.161-168 [Ce 78b6-79a3]).

In due course Rāhula, well-nourished although 'denied all sacramental rites' (*sarvakriyāhīna*), begins to crawl, then walk and then speak. However, not only is he barred from his grandfather's presence, but wherever he goes people avert their faces or flee (IX.169-171 [Ce 79a3-4]).

Meanwhile, Devadatta flouts the king's orders by helping himself to other men's women. Rāhula, now described as courageous (*mahāvīra*), wise (*prajñāvat*) and of great physical strength (*balavattama*), roams at will. While Devadatta still labels him a bastard (*kundā*) born of a demon (*dākini*), and delights in the universal revulsion he inspires, Rāhula's precocious development alarms him, for while the boy remains alive he feels certain that his dynastic ambitions cannot be fulfilled. After lecturing his relatives and retainers (*nijajana*) on Rāhula as a goblin (*vetāla*) who is sucking the life out of his own grandparents, Devadatta

forbids all contact with the boy and, still longing for power, carries on scheming (IX.172-183 [Ce 79a4-b3]).

As Devadatta fears, Rāhula begins to demonstrate that, despite his repulsive exterior, he is very much his father's son (IX.184-206 [Ce 79b3-80a7]). Despite her shame at his deformity, her son's obvious intelligence, valour and physical strength astonish Yaśodharā. Years pass. He makes numerous friends his own age; their antics delight the palace officials. He proves to be a most acute student and soon is tutoring his friends.

Winning over everyone with his good qualities, he astonished his grandfather and delighted his mother and the palace women; deformed though he was, his virtues made him appear beautiful... Full of virtues, the boy was esteemed by all, despite being deformed: is not the sweet-voiced cuckoo, although dark-coloured, so esteemed? It was as if his beauty were obscured by the radiance of his virtues, as the moon's beauty is entirely obscured by the sun's radiance.⁶²

Rāhula is so skilled in statecraft (*nītividyācakṣaṇa*) that he is able to dissuade Śuddhodana from immoral political decisions (*bhūpam nyāṣedhit pāpakarmataḥ*). He studies and discusses Dharma, devotedly serves the king and gives generously to suppliants. Even his games of make-believe with other children demonstrate his lofty spiritual nature: 'I am the disciple, you are the preceptor' I shall seek alms without any thought of acquisition⁶³. Even in play, he never speaks falsely. By the time Rāhula is six years old, even Śuddhodana marvels at the boy's extraordinary virtues. He finally accepts Rāhula as his true grandson but, worldling that he be, cannot accept his frightful appearance. Still the king longs for Sarvārthaśiddha.

62 gunena nirjayan sarvān vismāpayan piśāmaham / harṣayan mātarām tāś ca virūpo 'pi babhau gunaiḥ // . . . gunavān mānyate lokair virūpo 'pi ca bālakah / kokilah kālavarno 'pi susvarah kim na mānyate // sarūpo 'ntarhita iva tasya gunamaricibhiḥ / sakalam kasya cardrasya bhāsvaccandrikayā iva // IX.191, 193-194 (Ce 79b7, 80a1-2).

63 śiṣyo 'ham tvam upādhyāyo bhiksārthī cāsmi nirmamah / krīdāyām ity asau dharmam prākarot sugatam smaran // IX.198 (Ce 80a3-4).

Devadatta is much alarmed by these developments. Powerless against the adult members of the royal family, he begins to work on Rāhula, claiming that 'you are a bastard — that is why you are so strong, intelligence and, yes, hideous'⁶⁴. Devadatta points out to Rāhula that his mother's husband left Kapilavastu twelve years before, yet he is only six years old, adding that both Sarvārthasiddha and Yaśodharā are 'divinely beautiful' while he is a hideous dwarf (*bhīmarūpo 'si vāmanah*). Devadatta advises Rāhula to question his mother about the man who sired him, claiming, finally, that this mysterious figure is about to return (IX.207-214 [Ce 80b1-5]).

Although hitherto Rāhula seems to have taken no notice of his unusual appearance or of others' reactions to it, his uncle's questions devastate him. In tears, he rushes to Yaśodharā and demands to know the name, identity, whereabouts and physical characteristics of his father (IX.215-18 [Ce 80b6-8]).

Weeping mother assures bawling son that the divinely handsome Sarvārthasiddha, Śuddhodana's son, is his own true father (IX.219-231 [CE 80b7-81a6]).

Right now he seeks the Jewel of Awakening, desirous of saving the world; in order to carry out an Observance, a great donation, he has betaken himself to the Isle of Dharma. After acquiring the great, auspicious wish-fulfilling gem, he is returning to extinguish the misery and poverty of the world. Then, through the power of that gem, you, too, will become beautiful, attain supreme felicity and be greatly honoured in the world⁶⁵.

Yaśodharā tells her son to ignore Devadatta, that the malicious accusations only blacken his own karma while cleansing Rāhula's own. She then enjoins him to practise recollection of the Three Jewels, maintain truthfulness in speech, serve Gautamī with

⁶⁴ *kunḍatvād ativiro 'si vijño virūpa eva ca* // IX.208cd (Ce 80b1-2).

⁶⁵ *tadāniṁ bodhiratnārthi jagaduddhārakāmukah / mahādānavratam kartum dharmadvipam upāyayau* // *mahāratnam samāśadya vāñchitārtha pradām śivam / pratyāgacchatī lokānām dāridraduḥkhaśāntaye* // *tadā ratnānubhāvena tvam api sundaro bhaveḥ / sukham anuttaram prāpya lokamānytaras tathā* // IX.222-224 (Ce 81a1-3).

devotion, attend on his teacher daily and work for the welfare of the people. Finally, Yaśodharā insists that Rāhula's deformity is due to a misdeed on her part⁶⁶.

This, however, fails to placate Rāhula. He insists on knowing the meaning of the word 'bastard' (*kunḍa*), for when his uncle called him that, all his friends laughed and for the first time he felt ashamed of his appearance. Yaśodharā is torn between offering an explanation — which will further distress a child already filled with doubts (*samśayākula*) — and saying nothing, which will further expose him to his uncle's lies. Her solution is to claim she can say no more than *kunḍa* refers to a grievous sin (*pāpa gariyas*), and tells her son that to learn more he must wait to ask his father. She assures Rāhula that his father understands everything, including the meaning of all words, the karmic bases of her own trials, the reason for the boy's deformity and indeed the karmic history of all. Since, she continues, Sarvārthasiddha will prove Devadatta an arrant liar, Rāhula must cover his ears and think of the Three Jewels whenever his evil uncle addresses

⁶⁶ In Ch.XXVII, 'The Maturing of the Deeds of Yaśodharā and Rāhulabhadra' (*yaśodharārāhulabhadrakarmavipāka*) (Ce219a3-225b5), the story of the cowherd (*dhenupālinī*) Hāriṇī (Yaśodharā) and her mother Bhadrā provides the karmic explanation of Yaśodharā's six-year pregnancy; that of the brothers Candra (Rāhula) and Sūrya (Ce220a4-225b6) for Rāhula's six-year gestation. However, neither BKA XXVII, nor BAKL LXXXIII, from which it quotes eight complete verses and numerous *pādas*, nor Mv (III.172-5), SBc (360-3), SBV (II.42⁵⁻²⁹, 43^{2-44¹⁶) or Mppś (II, pp.1006-7), all of which contain versions of the same stories, make any mention of Rāhula as deformed or ugly. However, in the Vicitrakarṇikāvadānamālā, Ānanda tells of a previous birth of the character Suvarṇavarna. In this birth Suvarṇavarna was 'Virūpa', son of the merchant Karna, a hideous and foul-smelling boy whom the Buddha Vipaśyin later rescues from his attempted suicide and transforms into the perfectly handsome 'Surūpa', who then becomes king of Bandhumati. See Mitra, *op. cit.*, pp.278-9 and *Suvarṇavarṇāvadāna* (ed. T. Rajapatinara, Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, Canberra 1974), Part I, §§ 85-92, 101-4. Possibly our author adapted his own account of the hideous Rāhula from this source.}

him. Rāhula diligently complies, and both mother and son pass the days anxiously awaiting Sarvārthaśiddha's return (IX.232-250 [Ce 8la6-82a1]).

Finally, Upagupta concludes the chapter and therefore this major section of the *Bhadrakalpavādāna* by addressing Aśoka in two *mālinī* verses:

Sire, [although] Śuddhodana still yearned [to see] his son's face, he passed the day delighting in his grandson's intelligence, while Gautamī, bereft of those lotuses, her eyes, overcame grief⁶⁷ by listening to the reports of him from every servant in the city.

[Sire, since] you long for that rare, sweet draught, the narrative of the Lord's noble deeds and since, because of the lengthy separation, you desire a speedy reunion [with him for all in Kapilavastu], then harken eagerly to the *Sulalitavṛtta* wherein it is said, 'He who is the vessel for the welfare of the three worlds acquired the Jewel of Awakening'⁶⁸

67 Here glossing *atiśokā* as *atitaśokā*, '[she who has] gone beyond grief'.

68 *sutamukham abhilāṣī bhūpa śuddhodano 'sau divasam anayad ittham pautraprajñābhitus!ah / vigatanayanapadmā gautamī cātiśokā sakalapurabhaṭebhyas tasya vārttām niśamya // sukrtamadhurapāne durlabhe sābhilāṣah sucirataraviyogā<> chighrasamyogam icchan / tribhuvanahitapātrām prāptavān bodiratnam iti Sulalitavṛttam karnaya protsukvāt // IX.251-252 (Ce 82a1-3). — Sulalitavṛtta = Lalitavistara.*

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A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF NĀNAVĪRA THERA'S 'A NOTE ON PĀTICCASAMUPPĀDA'

Part One

Bhikkhu Bodhi

Introduction

1. Nānavīra Thera's *Notes on Dhamma* was first published in 1963, during the author's lifetime, in a small cyclostyled edition distributed to a select list of recipients. During the following two years the author made a number of corrections and substantial additions to his original text, leaving behind at his death an enlarged typescript entitled *Notes on Dhamma (1960-1965)*. For twenty-two years this version circulated from hand to hand among a small circle of readers in the form of typed copies, photocopies and handwritten manuscripts. Only in 1987 did *Notes on Dhamma* appear in print, when it was issued along with a collection of the author's letters under the title *Clearing the Path: Writings of Nānavīra Thera (1960-1965)*¹.

Even this edition, a print run of 1,000 copies, turned out to be ephemeral. Barely nine months after the book was released, the editor-publisher (who had invested at least five years preparing the material for publication) died under tragic circumstances. Path Press effectively closed down and the question whether the book will ever be reprinted still hangs in the air. But in spite of its limited availability, *Clearing the Path* has had an impact on its readers that has been nothing short of electric. Promoted solely by word of mouth, the book has spawned an international network of admirers — a Theravāda Buddhist underground — united in their conviction that *Notes on Dhamma* is the sole key to unlock the inner meaning of the Buddha's

1 Path Press, Colombo 1987.

Teaching. Some of its admirers have called it the most important book written in this century, others have hailed it as the most outstanding work on the Dhamma to appear since the Nikāyas were first written down on palm leaves at the Aluvihāra. For the book's enthusiasts no effort is too much in struggling through its dense pages of tightly compressed arguments and copious Pāli quotations in order to fulfil its author's invitation 'to come and share his point of view'.

Ñāṇavīra's purpose in writing the *Notes* was, in his own words, 'to indicate the proper interpretation of the Suttas', the key to which he believed he had discovered through an experience that he identified as the arising of the Eye of Dhamma (*dhammacakkhu*), that is, the attainment of stream-entry². His proposition sounds innocuous enough as it stands, until one discovers that the author sees this task as entailing nothing less than a radical re-valuation of the entire Theravāda exegetical tradition. Few of the standard interpretative principles upheld by Theravāda orthodoxy are spared the slashing of his pen. The most time-honoured explanatory tools for interpreting the Suttas, along with the venerated books from which they stem, he dismisses as 'a mass of dead matter choking the Suttas'. The Abhidhamma Pitaka, the Milindapañha, the Visuddhimagga, the Pāli Commentaries — all come in for criticism, and the author says that ignorance of them 'may be counted as a positive advantage as leaving less to be unlearned'³.

2. Strangely, although *Notes on Dhamma* makes such a sharp frontal attack on Theravāda orthodoxy, to date no proponent of the mainstream Theravāda tradition has risen to the occasion and attempted to counter its arguments. The few traditionalists who have read the book have either disregarded it entirely or merely branded it as a thicket of errors. But to my knowledge none has tried to point out exactly what these errors are and to meet its criticisms with reasoned argumentation based directly on the texts.

2 See *Clearing the Path*, pp.153, 495.

3 *Ibid.*, p.5.

The present essay is an attempt to fill that gap. I will be concerned here with only one note in Ñāṇavīra's collection, his 'A Note on Paṭiccasamuppāda'. This note, however, is the main pillar of Ñāṇavīra's distinctive approach to the Suttas; it is the first and longest note in the book and the most consistently radical. The Note sounds a bold challenge to the prevailing 'three-life interpretation' of the twelve-factored formula of dependent arising. The traditional interpretation of this formula, expounded in full detail in the Visuddhimagga (Chapter XVII), has guided followers of mainstream Theravāda Buddhism for centuries in their understanding of this most profound and difficult principle of the Dhamma. Hence a criticism of it that claims to be validated by the Suttas themselves strikes from within at the very core of the orthodox Theravāda commentarial tradition.

At the beginning of his Note, Ñāṇavīra states that he assumes his reader is acquainted with this traditional interpretation and is dissatisfied with it (§2). Such dissatisfaction, he asserts, is not unjustified, and he proposes to provide in its place what he modestly claims 'may perhaps be found to be a more satisfactory approach'. I too will assume that the reader is already acquainted with the three-life interpretation, and hence I will not recapitulate that interpretation here. While the reader who has personal access to Ñāṇavīra's Note and can refer to it in the course of this discussion may be able to follow my arguments here more easily, for the benefit of readers who are not so situated I will recount below those contentions of his with which I take issue.

3. My purpose in writing this examination is to vindicate the traditional three-life interpretation against Ñāṇavīra's critique of it. I propose to show that the approach which he considers to be 'more satisfactory' not only cannot be justified by reference to the discourses of the Buddha, but is in fact contradicted by them. I also intend to establish that, contrary to Ñāṇavīra's allegations, the three-life interpretation, though not explicitly stated in such terms, is fully in accord with the Buddha's teachings. In my view, this interpretation, far from deviating from the Suttas, simply makes explicit the Buddha's intention in expounding dependent arising.

In making this assertion, I am not saying that the detailed exposition of *pati^ccasamuppāda* (PS) as found in the Pāli Commentaries can in all particulars be traced back to the Suttas. The aim of the Commentaries, in their treatment of PS, is to correlate the Suttanta teaching of PS with the systematic analysis of phenomena and their conditional relations as found in the Abhidhamma. This results in an explanation of PS that is far more complex and technical than anything that can be drawn out from the Sutta texts themselves. I do not think that acceptance of the basic dynamics of the 'three-life' approach entails acceptance of the details of the commentarial explanation, and I also believe that the Commentaries take unnecessary risks when they try to read back into the Suttas ideas deriving from tools of interpretation that appeared perhaps centuries after the Suttas were compiled. All that I wish to maintain is that the essential vision underlying the commentarial interpretation is correct: namely, that the twelvefold formula of PS extends over three lives and as such describes the generative structure of *Saṁsāra*, the round of repeated births⁴.

Like Nāṇavīra, I take as the sole ultimate authority for interpretation of the Dhamma the Buddha's discourses as found in the four main Nikāyas and in the older strata of the Khuddaka Nikāya. I share with him the view that these books can be considered the most trustworthy record of the Buddha's teaching, and hence should be turned to as the final court of appeal in resolving questions about the correct interpretation of the Dhamma.

⁴ In this paper I will not be concerned at all with the Vibhaṅga's Abhidhamma Bhājaniya (Chapter VI), which applies the 12 factors of PS to each single mind-moment (*citta*) in the Abhidhamma analysis of consciousness. Although here all 12 factors are shown to be operative at a single moment, this treatment of the doctrine is not put forward as an interpretation of the PS formula intended in the Suttas, as is clear from the distinction the Vibhaṅga itself makes between the Suttanta method and the Abhidhamma method. In its treatment of PS by the Suttanta method, the Vibhaṅga confirms the three-life approach.

Unlike Nāṇavīra, however, I do not hold that all later works, such as the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and the Commentaries, should be rejected point blank as miasmas of error and decay. We must certainly accept the findings of scientific scholarship regarding the dating of the canonical and post-canonical texts, and should recognise that Theravāda doctrine has evolved in several strata through the Abhidhamma, the Commentaries and the later exegetical works. In my view, however, this does not mean that every text that was composed after the age of the Nikāyas must be regarded with distrust or disdain.

Fundamental Attitudes

4. Before I turn to examine certain specific points in Nāṇavīra's Note I wish to focus on one discomfiting consequence entailed by his insistence that his view of PS is exclusively and absolutely correct. The three-life interpretation of PS has been maintained by the Theravāda tradition virtually from the time that tradition emerged as a distinct school. It goes back long before the time of Buddhaghosa's commentaries and can be found already in near-definitive form in the Vibhaṅga of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and the Paṭisambhidāmagga of the Sutta Piṭaka, works dating from around the third century BCE. Further, this interpretation, in its essential outlines, is by no means peculiar to the Theravāda school. It was also shared, with minor differences in details, by the early rivals of the Theravāda, the Sarvāstivāda and Mahāsāṅghika, which suggests that at least in outline this way of explaining PS already preceded the first schisms. The same three-life division can be found in the works of the great Mādhyamika philosopher Nāgārjuna (e.g., in his Mūlamādhyamikakārikā, Chapter 26), and is also held in the present day by the Mahāyāna schools that have inherited the exegetical methodology of ancient Indian Buddhism⁵. In contrast, Nāṇavīra's view of PS, as pertaining

⁵ Thus the so-called Tibetan Wheel of Life, which probably stems from the old Indian Sarvāstivāda, expressly coordinates a pictorial representation of the 12 factors with a picture of the different planes of rebirth.

solely to a single life, appears to be without precedent in the tenet systems of early Buddhism. Thus, when Nāṇavīra holds that he has correctly grasped the Buddha's intention in expounding PS, this implicitly commits him to the thesis that the entire mainstream Buddhist philosophical tradition has utterly misinterpreted this most fundamental Buddhist doctrine, and had already done so within two centuries after the Master's demise. While it is not altogether impossible that this occurred, it would seem a lapse of astonishing magnitude on the part of the early Buddhist community.

5. Of course, the above argument is not in itself compelling, for one might still be prepared to stand behind Nāṇavīra's claim no matter how audacious it may be. So let us now turn to the Note itself and examine his views on PS. For the present we will pass over his opening salvos against the three-life interpretation. Instead, let us move directly into the sections of the Note in which he reveals his own 'more satisfactory approach'. We will return to the criticisms later and see if they truly require us to abandon the traditional understanding of the doctrine.

Nāṇavīra maintains that PS, in its twelve-factored formulation, applies solely and entirely to our existential situation in this present life, without any reference to temporal divisions. It is, in his view, an ever-present existential structure of the unenlightened mind describing the mode of being of the 'uninstructed common person' (*assutavā puthujjana*). Nāṇavīra insists that this interpretation of PS alone offers us a way to resolve the immediate problem of existence in the present itself: 'It is a matter of one's fundamental attitude to one's own existence — is there, or is there not, a *present* problem, or rather, *anxiety* that can only be resolved *in the present*? (§7).

I fully agree with Nāṇavīra that our interpretation of PS must flow from our 'fundamental attitude to (our) own existence'. It is also clear from the Suttas that the Buddha's motive in teaching PS is to lead us to a present solution of the existential problem of suffering. Repeatedly in the Suttas we see the Buddha teaching PS in order to lay bare the structure of conditions that underlies the origination and cessation of *dukkha*. However, in

order to understand how PS fulfils this function, we should focus on the question: What is the meaning of the *dukkha* that the Buddha's Teaching is designed to liberate us from? Nāṇavīra contends that this *dukkha* is the anxiety and stress that pervade our present existence, and hence he interprets all the terms of the standard PS formula in a way that lends support to this contention. However, if we read the Suttas on their own terms, in their totality, we find that Nāṇavīra's understanding of *dukkha* falls far short of the vision of the First Noble Truth that the Buddha wishes to impart to us. Of course, *dukkha* does include 'existential anxiety', and there are several suttas which define the conditions for the arising and removal of such *dukkha*⁶. An unbiased and complete survey of the Nikāyas, however, would reveal that the problem of *dukkha* to which the Buddha's Teaching is addressed is not primarily existential anxiety, nor even the distorted sense of self of which such anxiety may be symptomatic. The primary problem of *dukkha* with which the Buddha is concerned, in its most comprehensive and fundamental dimensions, is the problem of our bondage to Samsāra — the round of repeated birth, ageing and death. And, as I will show presently, these terms are intended quite literally as signifying biological birth, ageing and death, *not* our anxiety over being born, growing old and dying.

A glance at the Suttas would suffice to reveal to us the 'fundamental attitudes' that motivated the Buddha and the early disciples in their own quest for deliverance. We find, for example, that each Bodhisatta, from Vipassi to Gotama, seeks the path to enlightenment with the thought, 'Alas, this world has fallen into trouble, in that *it is born and ages and dies and passes away and is reborn*, and it does not know the escape from this suffering of ageing and death'⁷. When young seekers go forth into homelessness out of faith in the Buddha, they do so because they

6 I have in mind particularly M 138 and S II 15–19. These show how *paritassanā*, which might be rendered 'anxiety', arises from clinging (*upādāna*) and ceases with the removal of clinging.

7 S II 5–11.

have realised: 'I am immersed in birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure and despair; I am immersed in suffering, afflicted with suffering. Perhaps one can discern here an end-making to this entire mass of suffering⁸. Again and again the Buddha stresses the misery of repeated existence within Samsāra, again and again he underscores the urgency of escaping from it (see e.g., S II 178-93). And his constant injunction to the monks throughout his ministry was to dwell diligently so that '*having abandoned the wandering on in births, you will make an end of suffering*' (*pahāya jātisamsāram dukkhass' antam karissati*)⁹. These words should leave no doubt that by putting an end to suffering the Buddha means — not release from existential anxiety — but release from the round of rebirths. Insofar as the Dhamma addresses the problem of our present suffering, it does so by situating that suffering in its larger context, our condition of samsāric bondage. The present cannot be considered only in its vertical depths. It must also be viewed as the intersection of the past and future, shaped by our past experience and harbouring our future destiny in its womb.

If the Dhamma is to enable us to extricate ourselves from the *dukkha* of repeated birth and death, it must make known the chain of causes that holds us in bondage to this round of repeated birth and death, and it must also indicate what must be done to bring this cycle to a halt. Throughout the Suttas we can find only one basic statement of the causal structure of Samsāra, one overarching formulation with many minor variations, and that is the twelvefold formula of dependent arising. If one's aim in following the Dhamma is to gain release from existential anxiety, then the three-life interpretation of PS may seem unsatisfactory and one may turn to Nāṇavīra's version as more adequate. But the task which the Buddha sets before his disciples is of a different nature: namely, to gain liberation from the recurrent cycle of birth, old age and death, that is, from bondage to Samsāra. Once one

⁸ M I 192, 460, 463, etc.

⁹ D II 121.

accepts this task as one's own, one will see that PS must be looked upon as a disclosure of the conditioned structure of Samsāra, showing us how our ignorance, craving and volitional activity keep us chained to the round of existence and drive us from one life to the next.

Birth, Ageing and Death

6. I now intend to take up for scrutiny what might be regarded as the two planks of Nāṇavīra's interpretation. The two planks to which I refer are his attempts to explain the relationships between those conditions which, in the traditional interpretation, are held to extend over different lifetimes. These are: (i) the nexus of *bhava*, *jāti* and *jarāmarana* — becoming ('being', in Nāṇavīra's translation), birth, and ageing-and-death; and (ii) the nexus of *avijjā*, *sankhārā* and *viññāna* — ignorance, formations ('determinations') and consciousness. I will show that Nāṇavīra's explanations of both these groups of factors fail to draw support from the source that he himself regards as the supreme authority in the interpretation of the Dhamma, namely, the Pāli Suttas. I will also show that, contra Nāṇavīra, on both points the Suttas confirm the traditional interpretation, which regards these connections as involving a succession of lives.

7. Let us first turn to Nāṇavīra's treatment of the former nexus (§10 of his Note):

The fundamental *upādāna* or 'holding' is *attavāda*, which is holding to a belief in 'self'. The *puthujjana* takes what appears to be his 'self' at its face value; and so long as this goes on he continues to be a 'self', at least in his own eyes (and in those of others like him). This is *bhava* or 'being'. The *puthujjana* knows that people are born and die; and since he thinks 'my self exists' so he also thinks 'my self was born' and 'my self will die'. The *puthujjana* sees a 'self' to whom the words *birth* and *death* apply.

Before we go any further, we should point out that Nāṇavīra does not cite any suttas to support his understanding of *bhava*, *jāti* and *jarāmarana*, and in fact there are no suttas to be found in

the Pāli Canon that explain the above terms in this way¹⁰. Moreover, on Nāṇavīra's interpretation it may not even be quite correct to say '*jātipaccayā jarāmaranam*'. On his view, it seems, one would be obliged to say instead, '*bhavapaccayā jāti, bhavapaccayā jarāmaranam*'. Since he regards the *puthujjana*'s taking himself to be a self as the basis for his notions 'my self was born' and 'my self will die', it follows that 'being' would be the condition for both 'birth' and 'ageing-and-death'. However, that is not what the Buddha himself asserts.

In many suttas dealing with PS the Buddha defines the above terms of the formula, and if we look at these texts we will see that they differ markedly from Nāṇavīra's explanation of them. The definitions are standardised:

'And what, monks, is ageing-and-death? The ageing of beings in the various orders of beings, their old age, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of life, weakness of faculties — this is called ageing. The passing of beings out of the various orders of beings, their passing away, dissolution, disappearance, dying, completion of time, dissolution of the aggregates, laying down of the body — this is called death. So this ageing and this death are (together) called ageing-and-death.'

'And what, monks, is birth? The birth of beings into the various orders of beings, their coming to birth, descent (into a womb), production, manifestation of the aggregates, obtaining the bases for contact — this is called birth'¹¹.

The above definitions, with their strings of synonyms and concrete imagery, clearly indicate that 'birth' refers to biological birth and 'ageing-and-death' to biological ageing and biological death — not to the *puthujjana*'s notions 'I was born, I will age

¹⁰ Nāṇavīra does quote one sutta (S 33/I 71) a little further down which he thinks supports his interpretation of *jarāmarananirodha*. However, this passage in no way compels acceptance of his interpretation; it can easily be explained in other ways that do not require us to jettison the traditional understanding of PS.

¹¹ D II 305; M I 49–50; S II 2–3, etc.

and die', or 'My self was born; my self ages and dies'. The textual definitions are perfectly straightforward and unambiguous and give no hint that the Buddha had some other idea to convey about the significance of these terms.

Bhava and Rebirth

8. The definition of *bhava* (Nāṇavīra's 'being') offered in the Suttas dealing expressly with PS is nowhere near as transparent as the former definitions, the reason being that the definition of the term is set against the particular cosmology that underlies the Buddha's Teaching. Nevertheless, the Suttas provide no basis for Nāṇavīra's claim that *bhava* means the *puthujjana*'s taking himself to be a self¹².

In the suttas on PS, when the Buddha defines *bhava*, he does so merely by enumerating the three types of becoming:

'And what, monks, is becoming? There are these three types of becoming: sense-sphere becoming; fine-material-sphere becoming; immaterial-sphere becoming'¹³.

This definition refers to the three planes of existence in the Buddhist cosmos, and the term '*bhava*' thus would signify concrete individual existence in one or another of these three planes. For illumination as to how *bhava* functions in the PS series, our most helpful resource is the Bhava Sutta, a short exchange between the Buddha and Ānanda:

'It is said, lord, "becoming, becoming". In what way, lord, is there becoming?'

'If, Ānanda, there were no *kamma* ripening in the sense realm, would sense-sphere becoming be discerned?'

'No, lord.'

'Thus, Ānanda, *kamma* is the field, consciousness is the seed, craving the moisture; for beings obstructed by ignor-

¹² I am not denying that the *puthujjana* does take himself to be a self, for that is precisely the act that defines him as a *puthujjana*. I am only disputing that this is the correct explanation of *bhava*.

¹³ S II 3.

ance and fettered to craving, consciousness becomes grounded in a low realm. Thus, Ānanda, there is the production of re-becoming in the future. It is thus, Ānanda, that there is becoming.

'If, Ānanda, there were no *kamma* ripening in the fine-material realm, would fine-material becoming be discerned?'

'No, lord'.

'Thus, Ānanda, *kamma* is the field, consciousness is the seed, craving the moisture; for beings obstructed by ignorance and fettered to craving, consciousness becomes grounded in a middling realm. Thus, Ānanda, there is the production of re-becoming in the future. It is thus, Ānanda, that there is becoming.'

'If, Ānanda, there were no *kamma* ripening in the immaterial realm, would immaterial becoming be discerned?'

'No, lord'.

'Thus, Ānanda, *kamma* is the field, consciousness is the seed, craving the moisture; for beings obstructed by ignorance and fettered to craving, consciousness becomes grounded in a superior realm. Thus, Ānanda, there is the production of re-becoming in the future. It is thus, Ānanda, that there is becoming'¹⁴.

Clearly, this sutta is offering a succinct statement of the same basic process described more extensively in the usual twelve-factored formula of PS: When there is *avijjā* and *tañhā*, ignorance and craving, then *kamma* — the volitional action of a being — effects the production of a new existence or 're-becoming in the future' (*āyatīm punabbhava*) in a realm that corresponds to the qualitative potential of that *kamma*. It is for this reason that the Commentaries interpret *bhava* in the usual PS formula as having two aspects that pertain to two different lives: one aspect called *kammabhava*, 'karmically active existence', which refers to the *kamma* with the potential of generating rebirth in one or another of the three realms; the other aspect called *upapattibhava*,

'rebirth existence', which refers to existence produced in one or another of the three realms¹⁵. Although such a distinction is not explicitly drawn in the Suttas, it seems to be implied by such passages as the one just quoted above.

9. Nāṇavīra claims that *jāti* does not mean rebirth (§9), and he is correct insofar as the word '*jāti*' does not by itself convey the sense of 're-birth'. Nevertheless, within the context of PS (and elsewhere in the Buddha's Teaching), *jāti* must be understood as implying rebirth. Insofar as *jāti*, 'the manifestation of the aggregates', etc., results from the formation of a new *bhava* 'in the future' by the *avijjā*, *tañhā* and *kamma* of the preceding existence, any instance of *jāti* is invariably a rebirth of the same continuum of consciousness. The stream of consciousness of the preceding life, 'grounded' in a particular realm by reason of its *kamma*, springs up in that realm and comes to growth and full manifestation there.

Contrary to Nāṇavīra, throughout the Suttas we often find the word '*jāti*' used in conjunction with the terms '*samsāra*' and '*punabbhava*' to underscore the fact that rebirth is intended. Take, for instance, the Buddha's famous 'Hymn of Victory' from the Dhammapada (v.153):

I ran vainly through the wandering of many births
Seeking the house-builder. Painful is birth again and again'.

Anekajātisamsāram sandhāvissam anibbisam
Gahakārakam gavesanto dukkhā jāti punappunam.

Or: 'A bhikkhu has abandoned the wandering on in births with its re-becoming' (*bhikkhuno ponobhaviko jātisamsāro pahino*; M I 139). Or the verse of Udāna 4:9:

'For the monk with a peaceful mind,
When he has cut off craving for becoming,
The wandering on in births is destroyed;
For him there is no re-becoming'.

Ucchinabhabatanhassa santacittassa bhikkhuno

Vikkhīno jātisamsāro natthi tassa punabbhavo.

Again, consider the declaration of final knowledge uttered by the arahants: 'This is my last birth; now there is no re-becoming' (*ayam antimā jāti, natthi dāni punabbhavo*; M I 167,173).

The above passages will show us, moreover, that the wedge that Nāṇavīra tries to drive between *jāti* and *punabbhavābhinibbatti* (in §10) is a spurious one. While in some passages the two are set in a conditional relationship to one another (the latter being a condition for the former — see S II 65), they are so closely connected that their meanings almost overlap. In fact, the word '*abhinibbatti*' is used as one of the synonyms of *jāti* in the standard definition of the latter. Apparently, when *abhinibbatti* is included in *jāti* we should understand *jāti* as comprising both conception and physical birth, while when they are differentiated *abhinibbatti* means conception and *jāti* is restricted to full emergence from the womb.

10. Now that we have adduced textual definitions of the terms 'ageing-and-death', 'birth' and 'becoming', let us see how they link up in the formula of PS, as explained by the Buddha himself. The text which elucidates this matter most succinctly is the Mahānidāna Sutta (D 15/II 57-8). To bring out the meaning I quote the relevant passage slightly simplified, without the catechistic format and with the sequence of conditions stated in direct order rather than in reverse order:

'If there were absolutely no clinging of any kind — no clinging to sense pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, clinging to a doctrine of self — then, in the complete absence of clinging, becoming would not be discerned: thus clinging is the condition for becoming.'

'If there were absolutely no becoming of any kind — no sense-sphere becoming, fine-material becoming, immaterial becoming — then, in the complete absence of becoming, birth would not be discerned: thus becoming is the condition for birth.'

'If there were absolutely no birth of any kind — that is, of gods in the state of gods, of celestials in the state of celestials, of spirits, demons, humans, animals, birds and

reptiles each in their own state — then, in the complete absence of birth, ageing-and-death would not be discerned: thus birth is the condition for ageing and death'.

Nāṇavīra would read this passage to mean: Because the *puthujjana* clings to a belief in self, he goes on being a self (of one or another of the three types); and because he assumes that he is such a self, he thinks 'my self was born' and 'my self will grow old and die' (see Note, §10). If, however, we read this passage in the light of the definitions of birth, ageing and death found in the Suttas, and in the light of the Bhava Sutta (pp.13-14), a very different meaning would emerge, which might be formulated thus: Because of clinging of any kind (not only clinging to a doctrine of self), one engages in actions that have the potential to ripen in one or another of the three realms of becoming. These actions dispose consciousness towards these realms. At death, if clinging persists, the predominant *kamma* steers consciousness towards the appropriate realm, i.e., it grounds the 'seed' of consciousness in that realm, and thereby generates a new existence. This 'production of re-becoming' comes to fulfilment in birth — that is, birth into one of the numerous classes of beings distributed among the three realms of becoming — and once birth occurs, it is inevitably followed by ageing-and-death.

Three Types of Saṅkhārā

11. Now let us turn to the other major plank in Nāṇavīra's 'Note on Paṭiccasamuppāda', his treatment of the interconnections between *avijjā*, *sankhārā* and *viññāna* (§§5-6, 11-16). In §5 Nāṇavīra cites the threefold enumeration of *sankhārā* commonly employed by the Suttas when they analyse the individual factors of the PS formula:

'And what, monks, are the *sankhārā*? There are these three *sankhārā*: body-*sankhāra*, speech-*sankhāra*, mind-*sankhāra*. These are called the *sankhārā*'¹⁶.

16 S II 4.

I will leave the word '*sankhārā*' untranslated here in order not to prejudice the discussion. Immediately after citing this passage, in order to supply definitions of the three types of *sankhārā*, Nāṇavīra quotes the Cūlavedalla Sutta (M 44/I 301). This sutta — a discussion between the lay devotee Visākha and his former wife, the arahant bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā — defines three types of *sankhārā* bearing exactly the same names as those mentioned in the texts on PS:

'And which, lady, is body-*sankhāra*, which is speech-*sankhāra*, which is mind-*sankhāra*?'¹⁷

'The in-and-out breaths are body-*sankhāra*, thinking-and-pondering are speech-*sankhāra*, perception and feeling are mind-*sankhāra*'.¹⁸

Having juxtaposed the two quotations, Nāṇavīra then criticises the traditional interpretation for maintaining that *sankhārā* in the PS formula must always be understood as *cetanā* or volition. To make this claim, he asserts, is to wind up holding that the in-and-out breaths, thinking-and-pondering, and perception and feeling, are respectively bodily, verbal and mental volition — a position that is clearly untenable.

Now both quotations cited above, taken in isolation, are perfectly legitimate. This, however, does not establish that the latter quotation is providing a definition of the same terms intended by the former quotation. While the two triads are expressed in Pāli by the same three compounds — *kāyasankhāra*, *vacīsankhāra*, *cittasankhāra* — Nāṇavīra overlooks a fact of prime importance for determining their meaning: namely, that in the Suttas the contexts in which the two triads appear are always kept rigorously separate. The definition of the three *sankhārā* found in the Cūlavedalla Sutta, and elsewhere in the Canon (at S IV 293), does not occur in the context of PS nor in a context that even touches on PS. This particular definition of the three types of *sankhārā* — *kāyasankhāra*, *vacīsankhāra*, *cittasankhāra* — always occurs in the course of a discussion on the attainment of

the cessation of perception and feeling (*saññāvedayita-nirodha*).¹⁹ It is intended to prepare the way for an explanation of the order in which the three types of *sankhāra* cease when a monk enters the attainment of cessation.

But that is not all. Not only are the three *sankhārā* of the Cūlavedalla Sutta always rigorously excluded from discussions of PS, but among all the suttas in which the Buddha exemplifies the expressions '*avijjāpaccayā sankhārā*' ('with ignorance as condition, formations') and '*sankhārapaccayā viññānam*' ('with formations as condition, consciousness'), there is not a single text in which he explains *sankhārā* in a way that has any relevance to the three kinds of *sankhārā* of the Cūlavedalla Sutta. The two types of discussions of *sankhārā* — the threefold enumeration of the Cūlavedalla Sutta and the threefold enumeration in the PS context — though employing the same terms, are assigned to completely separate compartments. Nowhere in the Sutta Piṭaka does the one triad extend beyond its own context and bear any explicit relationship to the other context. If the Buddha had intended the *sankhārā* that are conditioned by ignorance and that condition consciousness to signify the in-and-out breaths, thinking-and-pondering, and perception and feeling, then one could reasonably expect to find at least one sutta on PS where he exemplifies *sankhārā* by way of the Cūlavedalla triad. However, not a single sutta of such a nature can be found anywhere in the entire Pāli Canon.¹⁹

Lack of textual corroboration is only one problem with

¹⁸ Two of these *sankhārā* — *kāyasankhāra* and *cittasankhāra* — are also mentioned in connection with the 16 aspects of the practice of mindfulness of breathing. See M III 82-3.

¹⁹ I should add here a brief rejoinder to Nāṇavīra's remark at §6 that the traditional interpretation (in its treatment of the *sankhārā* factor in PS) 'altogether ignores the Cūlavedalla Sutta'. It certainly does not. The Visuddhimagga, in its explication of the term '*sankhārā*' in relation to PS, mentions the triad of the Cūlavedalla Sutta, but it distinguishes this triad from the types of *sankhārā* that are conditioned by ignorance (Vism XVII,47).

Ñāṇavīra's proposal to read the Cūlavedalla triad of *sankhārā* into the interpretation of the PS formula. Another objection, even more formidable, can be brought against this suggestion, namely, that it leads to incoherence. For the *sankhārā* of the PS formula must depend upon ignorance as their necessary condition and must cease with the cessation of ignorance, but the three *sankhārā* of the Cūlavedalla Sutta do not meet this requirement. These *sankhārā* are not necessarily dependent upon ignorance and do not cease with the ceasing of ignorance. Although the arahant has completely eradicated ignorance, he continues to breathe in and out (except when in the fourth *jhāna* and higher attainments), to think and ponder (except when in the second and higher *jhānas*), and to perceive and feel (except when in the cessation of perception and feeling). But, what does cease for the arahant with the cessation of ignorance are volitional formations — *sankhāra* understood as *sañcetanā*. Whereas the non-arahant's bodily, verbal and mental activities are constructive forces conditioned by ignorance that sustain the round of rebirths, the arahant's activities are karmically extinct. They no longer sustain the continuation of the round, no longer project consciousness into any new mode of becoming.

12. In analysing the teaching of PS, the texts use the two terms *cittasaṅkhārā* and *manosaṅkhārā* as though they were interchangeable. This is not typical of the Suttas, which usually reserve *citta* and *mano* for separate contexts. When the texts define *sankhārā* in the PS formula, they do so by enumerating the three types of *sankhārā*: *kāyasankhāra*, *vacīsankhāra*, *cittasaṅkhārā*; yet they do not take the further step of defining these terms as such. Then, when they exemplify the function of *sankhārā* in PS, they employ the triad of *kāyasankhāra*, *vacīsankhāra*, *manosaṅkhārā*. The Pāli Commentaries identify the two triads, taking them as alternative expressions for the same thing; both are understood to refer to bodily volition, verbal volition and mental volition (*kāyasañcetanā*, *vacīsañcetanā*, *manosañcetanā*). Ñāṇavīra takes issue with this identification, holding that the two triads must be distinguished. He admits that the second triad is to be identified with *cetanā*, but insists that the terms used in the first triad have to be understood by way of the explanation given in the

Cūlavedalla Sutta.

This assertion, as we have seen, does not receive confirmation from the Suttas. The original source on which the Pāli Commentaries base their identification of the two triads is the Vibhaṅga of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. In that work, in the Suttanta Bhājaniya (Sutta Analysis) section of its Paṭiccasamuppāda Vibhaṅga, we read:

What are the *sankhārā* that are conditioned by ignorance? Meritorious *sankhāra*, demeritorious *sankhāra*, imperturbable *sankhāra*; body-*sankhāra*, speech-*sankhāra*, mind-*sankhāra*...

Therein, bodily volition is body-*sankhāra*; verbal volition is speech-*sankhāra*; mental volition (*manosañcetanā*) is mind-*sankhāra* (*cittasaṅkhāra*). These are called the *sankhāra* conditioned by ignorance²⁰.

Ñāṇavīra may refuse to acknowledge the authority of the Vibhaṅga and insist that he will not relinquish his view unless a sutta can be brought forward confirming this definition. This attitude, however, would appear to be an unreasonable one. Even though the more elaborate conceptions of the Abhidhamma may be products of a later age than the Suttas, the Suttanta Bhājaniya sections of the Vibhaṅga can make a cogent claim to antiquity. Evidence suggests that this portion of the Vibhaṅga is extremely old, dating from perhaps the third century BCE, and thus represents the understanding of the Buddhist community from a period not long after the Buddha's Parinibbāna. It would even be plausible to maintain that this body of material was originally an old commentary on basic Suttanta terminology going back to the very first generation of the Buddha's disciples; it is not specifically Abhidhammic in character and may have been absorbed into the Abhidhamma Piṭaka owing to the lack of any other suitable repository for it.

In any case, in the absence of direct clarification of the issue

²⁰ Vibhaṅga, §116 (Burmese script ed.).

in the Suttas themselves, the Vibhaṅga becomes the most ancient source to which we can turn for help in clarifying PS terminology. There we find the triad of *kāyasankhāra*, *vacīsankhāra* and *cittasankhāra* explained in a way that confirms the exclusive identification of the *sankhārā* factor in the PS formula with *cetanā*. This lends weight to the view that this second link should be taken as *kamma* and its relation to *viññāna* as that of the kammic cause from the preceding existence.

The Meaning of 'Saṅkhārā'

13. I intend to examine very briefly all the suttas that help shed light on the *sankhārā* factor in the PS formulation, as found in the Nidāna Saṃyutta, the Buddha's short discourses on dependent arising. But first a few words should be said about Nāṇavīra's general understanding of the word '*sankhārā*'. He maintains that this word has a univocal meaning relevant to all the contexts in which it occurs. The meaning he assigns to it is that of 'something upon which something else depends' (§11); hence his rendering 'determinations'. The Suttas themselves do not offer a single etymological derivation of the word with unrestricted application. The well-known derivation — *sankhatam abhisankharonti ti tasmā sankhārā ti vuccanti* (in Nāṇavīra's terminology, 'They determine the determined, therefore they are called determinations') — applies specifically to *sankhārā* as the fourth of the five aggregates, not to *sankhārā* in all usages. In this context they obviously signify *cetanā*, volition, understood as a constructive force, and thus an active derivation is appropriate.

The Pāli Commentaries offer two derivations of the word '*sankhārā*'. One is active (as given above), the other passive (*sankhariyanti ti sankhārā*). Thus the Commentaries hold that the word can signify either things that actively produce other things, or things that are produced by other things. Which meaning is relevant depends on the context. In the two contexts of PS and the fourth aggregate, the active sense is relevant, as in both cases the *sankhārā* are volitions. However, in such statements as '*sabbe sankhārā anicca*', etc., the Commentaries explain that *sankhārā* should be understood as *sankhata-sankhārā*, that is, as conditioned things.

According to the Majjhima Nikāya Commentary, the passive sense also pertains to two of the three *sankhārā* of the Cūlavedalla Sutta: (i) the in-and-out breaths are body-*sankhāra* because they are determined by the body, made by the body, produced by the body; (iii) perception and feeling are mind-*sankhāra* because they are determined by the mind, made by the mind, produced by the mind²¹. In contrast, (ii) thinking-and-pondering, as speech-*sankhāra*, play an active role: they are determinants of speech²².

The commentarial recognition of a twofold derivation of the term '*sankhārā*' seems to be confirmed by the texts. For instance, the Cūlavedalla Sutta explains:

'In-and-out breaths, friend Visākha, are bodily, these things are dependent upon the body, that is why the in-and-out breaths are bodily *sankhāra*. . . Perception and feeling are mental, these things are dependent upon the mind; that is why perception and feeling are mind-*sankhāra*'²³.

21. Commentary to Cūlavedalla Sutta. The Pāli reads: *Kāyena saṅkhariyati kariyati nibbatti�ati ti kāyasaṅkhāro; cittena saṅkhariyati kariyati nibbatti�ati ti cittasaṅkhāro*.

22. *Vācām saṅkharoti karoti nibbatteti ti vacīsaṅkhāro*. I here follow the reading of the Burmese-script Sixth Council edition, which has the support of the Sub-commentary, rather than the Sinhala-script Hewavitarne edition, which reads this sentence as a passive, parallel to the definitions of the other two types of *sankhārā*. Apparently the latter reading, which is at variance with the sense of the sutta text, is a scribal error. The PTS edition was not available to me.

23. M I 301: *Assāsapassāsā kho āvuso Visākha kāyikā ete dhammā kāyapaṭibaddhā, tasmā assāsapassāsā kāyasaṅkhāro. . . saññā ca vedanā ca cetasiā ete dhammā cittapaṭibaddhā, tasmā saññā ca vedanā ca cittasaṅkhāro ti*.

It should be noted that Nāṇavīra, in translating '*paṭibaddha*' as 'bound up with', does not capture quite the precise nuance of the Pāli. As used in the texts, '*paṭibaddha*' generally signifies that the thing which it qualifies is subject to or dependent upon the thing to which it is joined in the compound or otherwise related: see in this connection M I 384; II 223; A V 87; Dhp 284. Thus when it is said that *assāsapassāsā* (in-breaths and out-breaths) are *kāyapaṭibaddhā dhammā* (things bound to the body), this means that they are sub-

In contrast, Nāṇavīra's insistence on assigning an exclusively active sense to *sankhārā* compels him to apply the old Procrustean bed of exegesis to several passages that do not easily submit to his interpretation. For example, in his separate note on *Sankhāra*²⁴ he attempts to explain how the reference to *sankhārā* in the Mahāsudassana Sutta (D 17/II 169ff.) can be interpreted in line with his view of *sankhārā* as active determinations. In this sutta the Buddha, after describing all the rich endowments and possessions of King Mahāsudassana, a king of the distant past, concludes with a homily on impermanence: 'See, Ānanda, how all those *sankhārā* have passed, ceased, altered. So impermanent, Ānanda, are *sankhārā* . . . this is enough for weariness with all *sankhārā*, enough for dispassion, enough for release'. Nāṇavīra discerns a cryptic message concealed in this passage thus: 'Those things [the possessions, etc.] were *sankhārā*; they were things on which King Mahāsudassana depended for his very identity; they determined his person as "King Mahāsudassana", and with their cessation the thought "I am King Mahāsudassana" came to an end'. There is nothing in the sutta itself to support this interpretation, and the text (as well as others of similar character) reads so much more naturally if we take *sankhārā* simply to mean conditioned things of the world. Moreover, other suttas can be found which include the same final exhortation on dispassion, yet which provide absolutely no ground for seeing the term *sankhārā* there as determinants of anyone's personal identity (see e.g., the Anamatagga Sāriṇyutta, S 15/II 178ff.).

TO BE CONCLUDED

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ordinate to and dependent upon the body, not that they are determinations for the body. Consider, in contrast, the explanation of why 'thinking-and-pondering' are called speech-*sankhāra*: 'First having thought and pondered, afterwards one breaks into speech; that is why thinking-and-pondering are speech-*sankhāra*' (*pubbe kho vitakketvā vicāretvā pacchā vācam bhindati, tasmā vitakkavicārā vacisankhāro ti*). Here the active sense is clearly in evidence.

24 *Clearing the Path*, pp.107-8.

EKOTTARĀGAMA (XXIII)

Translated from the Chinese Version by
Thich Huyēn-Vi and Bhikkhu Pāsādika
in collaboration with Sara Boin-Webb

Tenth Fascicle
Part 19
(Supplication)

3. ¹Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in Śravasti, at Jetī's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍada's Park.² Then Śakra, the chief of gods, approached the Exalted One, and having approached, he bowed down his head [at the Exalted One's] feet. Standing at one side, he spoke thus to the Exalted One: How does a bhikṣu overcome sensuous greed, realise his heart's release and, revered by gods and men, finally reach the 'place of [ultimate] peace (*kṣema*)' where there is no distress? – In this respect, Kauśika,³ the Exalted One said to Śakra, the chief of gods, if a bhikṣu hears of the existential constituents (*dharma*) as being empty (*śūnya*) and realises that there is nothing [in terms of 'I and 'mine']⁴, he perfectly understands

¹ See T2, 593c13 ff.; Hayashi, p. 162 ff. Cf. M I, p. 251 ff. (Cūlatañhā-sankhayasutta).

² The Buddha's whereabouts in the Pāli parallel differs: 'near Sāvatthī in the Eastern Monastery in the palace of Migāra's mother' (see I.B. Horner, *The Middle Length Sayings I* (PTS), London 1987, p. 306).

³ Cf. BSR 8, 1 - 2 (1991), p. 144, n. 13. 拘翼 rendering Kauśika seems peculiar to EĀ.

⁴ Here EĀ substantially differs from the Pāli *sabbe dhammā nālañc abhinvesayāti*, which I.B. Horner translates by 'It is not fitting that there should be inclination towards any (psycho - physical) condition.' Perhaps it would be preferable to interpret the present sentence of EĀ as '...and realises that there is nothing [in terms of an own-being or self-nature (*svabhāva*)]'. Considering the likelihood of the Mahāsāṅghika affiliation of EĀ, the latter interpretation may be more suitable. As for associating EĀ with the Mahāsāṅghikas, see BSR 11, 2 (1994), p. 157 f., n. 2. To the given references should be added André Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule*, Paris 1955, pp. 55 ff., 100 ff. See also Paul Harrison, 'Sanskrit Fragments of a Lokottaravādin Tradition', in: L.A. Hercus et al. (eds.), *Indological and Buddhist Studies*, Vol. in Honour of Professor J.W. de Jong on his 60th Birthday, Canberra 1982, p. 225 ff., on 'a Prākrit proto-

and knows in accordance with fact what all existential constituents [are like]. Whatever feeling (*dharma*) he feels concerning his body, painful or pleasant or neither painful nor pleasant, in respect of this very body [of his] he contemplates them thoroughly as being impermanent and as ultimately being empty. When he has contemplated the transitoriness of these [feelings being ...] neither painful nor pleasant, no notions (*saṃjñā*) occur to him and, therefore, he is not afraid of anything. On account of his fearlessness he realises complete Nirvāṇa. He knows in accordance with fact: Birth and death have come to an end, and the holy life (*brahmacarya*) has been lived, what [had to be] done has been done, and there will be no more coming into existence. So it is, Śakra, chief of gods, that a bhikṣu overcomes sensuous greed, realises his heart's release and, revered by gods and men, finally reaches the 'place of [ultimate] peace' where there is no destruction and distress. – Then Śakra, the chief of gods, bowed down [his head] at the Exalted One's feet, circumambulated him thrice and withdrew.

Now at that time Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana had gone [to a place] not far from the Exalted One's and was sitting there cross-legged, straightening body and mind and cultivating recollection (*smṛti*) in front of him. Then it occurred to Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana: As for (T2, 594a) Śakra, [I wonder] whether he has penetrated⁵ what has been imparted to him or not. Now I should find that out. – Then, with the help of his 'bases of supernormal power', Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana, as one might bend and [again] stretch out one's arm, instantly went to the Trāyastriṁśa gods. On seeing Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana coming from afar, Śakra, the chief of gods, rose and went to welcome him respectfully, saying: Welcome, Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana! The Venerable has not come here for a very long time indeed. [We] hope the Venerable will favour us with an exposition making clear the meaning of

Mahāyāna tradition current among various subsects of the Mahāsāṃghikas'.

⁵ Lit.: 'is able to follow up the teaching' (得道跡); *abhi-sam-i* is usually rendered 正觀, 正見.

the Teaching and will take his seat here. – Now Maudgalyāyana asked Śakra, the chief of gods: I should like to hear from you what the Exalted One taught you about overcoming sensuous greed. This is the opportunity for [you] to let me know. – Just now, replied Śakra, the chief of gods, I am extremely busy with heavenly affairs. I have both personal things to do and also things concerning all the gods. I have forgotten what I was taught. Formerly, Maudgalyāyana, there was a battle with the demons (*asura*). On the very day that fighting broke out, the gods were victorious and the demons retreated. I personally went to fight at that time. Soon after [the victory I] returned as leader of the gods and took my seat in the uppermost heavenly palace [named] Vaijayanta⁶ Palace.⁷ The palace was given this name on account of our victory in the battle. Flights of stairs have been achieved, and there is a series of roads worthwhile looking at. At the upper end of each [of all the uppermost] stairways [belonging with Vaijayanta Palace] there are seven hundred gabled houses (*kūṭagāra*),⁸ and up there in each of them there are seven nymphs⁹ each of whom have seven attendants. Hopefully, Venerable Maudgalyāyana will take a look at them. –

Then Śakra, the chief of gods, and the heavenly ruler Vaiśravana, [having stepped] behind Venerable Maudgalyāyana, accompanied [him] to Vaijayanta Palace. On [their arrival] Śakra... and the heavenly ruler Vaiśravana said to Mahā-Maudgalyāyana: This is Vaijayanta Palace; please fully enjoy its sight. – This is a very fine place, Maudgalyāyana said to the heavenly ruler, and it is all due to meritorious acts persistently performed in previous existences that,

⁶ Soothill, p. 376a: 最勝 = *vijaya*, but without reference to Indra's palace; *op. cit.*, p. 60b, mentions the palace without giving the Chinese characters. Monier-Williams has *Vaijayanta* (Pāli: *Vejayanta*), a) 'the banner of Indra', b) 'the palace of Indra'.

⁷ For 'Palace' EĀ oddly: 講堂, 'preaching or lecture hall'. Cf. Foguang, p. 4554c: 最勝堂, described as Indra's palace after his, Śakra's, defeating the Asuras.

⁸ For Chinese Tripitaka references see Foguang, p. 6095c.

⁹ EĀ, instead of *apsaras*, lit.: 'woman-treasures' (pertaining to universal monarchs) – cf. BSR 11, 1 (1994), p. 55.

as natural consequence, this gem of a palace was obtained. It is just like people who, for a little while, are happy and congratulate themselves [by saying]: It is like the heavenly palace – all is obtained due to meritorious acts performed in previous existences. –

Now the nymphs to the left and right of Śakra, the chief of gods, ran away helter-skelter. Just like persons who are timid and shy, similarly the nymphs, a moment ago close to Śakra..., on seeing Mahā-Maudgalyāyana coming from afar, ran away panic-stricken. At the [same] time the following occurred to Mahā-Maudgalyāyana: This Śakra, the chief of gods, is too much given to indolence. Now¹⁰ I should cause some feeling of terror. – Immediately, with the toe of his right foot Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana touched the ground [so that] the palace began to tremble and quake in six ways.¹¹ While both Śakra... and the heavenly ruler Vaiśravana were frightened out of their wits and their hair¹² stood on end, they thought: This Mahā-Maudgalyāyana has indeed great psychic power¹³ in that he is capable of letting this palace start trembling and shaking. Absolutely extraordinary! Absolutely unparalleled! There has never been anything like this. – Then the following came into Mahā-Maudgalyāyana's mind: Now this Śakra is frightened out of his wits, and this is the occasion for my asking about the deep meaning [of what the Exalted One told him]. – How, Kauśika, [he asked Śakra,] does one, subject to sensuous greed, overcome it according to what the Tathāgata told [you]? This is the opportunity [for you] to speak to persons like me who are anxious [to listen]. – Maudgalyāyana, replied Śakra, the chief of gods, a while ago I approached the Exalted One, bowed down my head [at his] feet and stood at one side. Then I asked the Exalted One how a bhikṣu overcomes sensuous greed and realises his heart's release; how he, revered by gods and men, finally reaches the 'place of the unconditioned' (*asamskrta*) where there is neither

¹⁰ After Hayashi, p. 164, 今 for 令 (T2, 594a28).

¹¹ Cf. Soothill, p. 137a: 'shaking, rising, waving, reverberating, roaring, arousing...'.

¹² Lit.: 'clothes-hair', nowhere explained in dictionaries.

¹³ Lit.: 'great bases of supernormal power'.

distress nor suffering. And these were the words of the Exalted One addressed to me: In this respect, Kauśika, when a bhikṣu¹⁴ has listened to the teaching that there is nothing whatsoever to cling to, [he] does not cling to forms and fully realises that in respect of existential constituents there is nothing [in terms of T and 'mine'].⁴ Thus, after having understood what all existential constituents [really are like], he thoroughly contemplates whatever painful, pleasant or neither painful nor pleasant [feelings he feels] as being impermanent, non-existent (*abhāva*), without any remainder (*apariśeṣa*) whatsoever and as not being annihilated (*anucchinna*).¹⁵ On account of his contemplating in this manner there is nothing for him to cling to, no worldly notions occur to him and he is not afraid of anything. Because of his fearlessness he realises complete Nirvāna. He knows in accordance with fact: Birth and death have come to an end... and there will be no more coming into existence. So it is, Śakra... that a bhikṣu overcomes sensuous greed... and finally reaches the 'place of the unconditioned' where there is neither distress nor suffering. – After listening to these words, I bowed down [my head] at the Exalted One's feet, circumambulated him thrice, withdrew and returned to the heavenly regions. –

On receiving these words of profound teaching, Venerable Mahā-Maudgalyāyana said goodbye to Śakra, the chief of gods, and to Vaiśravana. When the complete teaching had been communicated [to] Maudgalyāyana, he disappeared among the Trāyastriṁśa gods and went to Sravasti, to Jet's Grove in Anāthapiṇḍada's Park as quickly as a person might bend and [again] stretch out his arm. He approached the Exalted One, bowed down his head [at the Exalted One's] feet and sat down at one side. Having taken his seat, Maudgalyāyana said to the Exalted One: The Tathāgata has imparted to Śakra, the chief of gods, the teaching as to how one overcomes

¹⁴ Against the singular in all other places, here EĀ and Hayashi inconsistently have the plural form.

¹⁵ Contemplating empty *dharma*s as being both 'non-existent' and 'not annihilated' is strongly reminiscent of Mahāsāṅghika and Mahāyāna thought. Cf. above n. 4.

greed. If only the Exalted One would impart it to me also. – You shall know it, the Exalted One replied to Maudgalyāyana, Śakra... approached me... and standing at one side, he asked me to explain the problem to him as to how a bhikṣu overcomes sensuous greed and realises his heart's release. I said to Śakra... : If a bhikṣu, Kauśika, fully understands that all existential constituents are empty and that there is nothing [in terms of 'I' and 'mine'], then there is nothing [for him anymore] to cling to. [He] fully realises that in respect of existential constituents there is nothing [in terms of 'I' and 'mine'] and, therefore, he knows all existential constituents to be impermanent, non-existent, without the least remainder and as not being annihilated. On account of his contemplating in this manner there is nothing for him to cling to... he realises complete Nirvāṇa. He knows in accordance with fact... no more coming into existence. So it is... that a bhikṣu overcomes sensuous greed and realises his heart's release. – Then Śakra... rose from his seat,¹⁶ bowed down his head at my feet, withdrew and returned to the heavenly regions. – After listening to the Buddha's words, Mahā-Maudgalyāyana was pleased and respectfully applied himself to practice.'

¹⁶ This is the most obvious instance of a number of factual inconsistencies occurring in this EA discourse. Moreover, Hayashi amends 坐 to 座.

OBITUARIES

Jean Boisselier (26 August 1912 — March 1996)

That we can marvel at the architectural glory of Angkor, the potent symbol of Indian civilisation in South-East Asia at its highest level, can be attributed to the single-minded achievements of the outstanding scholar, Jean Henri Joseph Albin Boisselier.

Born in Paris, he studied at l'École du Louvre (1946-49) and the Sorbonne (1956-60), joined the staff of l'École française d'Extrême-Orient in 1949 and occupied the post of Curator at their museum in Phnom Penh (1950-55), for which he produced the brochure, *Le Musée Albert-Sarrazin de Phnom Penh* in 1954. Concurrently he was their official delegate in Cambodia in charge of the the conservation of Angkor.

Returning to France for health reasons, he became a member of the Centre nationale de recherche scientifique and was supervisor of 'Oriental Languages and Civilisations' (1962-65). From 1957 he directed the course on 'Indian and South-East Asian Archaeology' at the University of Paris' Institut d'Art et d'Archéologie, began teaching the subject at the Sorbonne in 1965 and was appointed Professor of the History and Archaeology of South and South-East Asia ten years later (retiring in 1980). During this period he also lectured in other departments of the University and directed the umbrella body — Unité d'équipe de recherche (UER) — for the 'Languages and Civilisations of India, the Orient and North Africa', the establishment of 'Studies of South-East Asia' and of the 'Archaeology and Civilisations of South and South-East Asia', all in liaison with the CNRS and EFEO. He was a conscientious and inspiring teacher, sacrificing his personal interests for the benefit of the students he trained. Thus, he did not submit a doctoral dissertation but was nevertheless awarded an honorary doctorate in 1970 on the basis of the invaluable material he prepared on South-East Asian culture. (He also served on the Editorial Committee of *Arts Asiatiques* from 1985.)

His wide field experience in Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand (— intermittently, Chef de la Mission archéologique française en Thaïlande, 1966-70) enabled him to write authoritatively in the field of South-East Asian art and archaeology, his full-length publications comprising *La Statuaire khmère et son évolution* (2 vols, EFEQ, 1955), *La Statuaire du Champa* (*ibid.*, 1963), *Trésors d'art de Thaïlande* (catalogue for the Musée Cernuschi, Paris 1964), *Manuel d'Archéologie de l'Asie du Sud-Est. I. Le Cambodge* (Paris 1966), *Notes sur l'art du bronze dans l'ancien Cambodge* (Ascona 1968), *La Sculpture en Thaïlande* (Fribourg 1974) — tr. as *The Heritage of Thai Sculpture* (New York-Tokyo 1975), *La Peinture en Thaïlande* (Fribourg 1976) — tr. as *Thai Painting* (New York-Tokyo 1976) and *Ceylon* (Geneva 1979). Apart from the numerous articles he contributed to encyclopaedias and periodicals, he provided the sections on South India, Sri Lanka and South-East Asia to the definitive study of *The Image of the Buddha* (ed. David Snellgrove, UNESCO, 1978), the sections on Sri Lanka, South-East Asia and 'the gestures of the Buddha' to *La Grammaire des formes et des styles d'Asie* (Fribourg 1978) — tr. as *Oriental Art. A Handbook of Styles and Forms* (London 1979) and the entry, 'The Meaning of Angkor Thom' to *Millennium of Glory. Sculpture of Angkor and Ancient Cambodia* (ed. Helen Jessup, London 1997). He collaborated with Madeleine Giteau, Jean Lacouture and the photographer, Marc Riboud, to produce *Angkor. Sérénité bouddhique* (Paris 1992) which was translated as *Angkor, the serenity of buddhism* (London 1993).

In his personal life, as a result of prolonged exposure to the gentle, civilising influence of Khmer Buddhism, Boisselier became a fervent follower of Theravāda Buddhism. This influence is felt in his last book, *La sagesse du Bouddha* (Paris 1993), tr. as *The Wisdom of the Buddha* (London 1994) and reviewed in the previous issue of *BSR* (pp.211-12). He frequented the Buddhivāmsa Pagoda in Champs-sur-Marne at which his funeral was conducted on 12 March 1996, presided over by Prince Sisowath Essaro, a long-time friend and former Minister of National Education in Cambodia.

Albert Le Bonheur (6 August 1938 – 8 February 1996)

By his untimely death, the world has been deprived of another specialist in South-East Asian art. Le Bonheur was born in Saigon of gallicised Tamil parentage from the French Indian colony of Pondichéry. Following primary and secondary education in Saigon, Hanoi and Paris, his innate scientific mind led to higher studies in the metropolitan capital, majoring in the History of Oriental Art and Languages. In 1966 he was awarded diplomas in Tamil and Sanskrit and Indonesian art from l'École du Louvre. He thus qualified as a philologist and an art historian.

Recruited as a curator at the Musée Guimet, he stayed there for almost thirty years, becoming head of the geographical section. From 1971 he taught at l'École du Louvre and edited *Arts Asiatiques* until 1984 (but remained on its Editorial Committee). He undertook fieldwork in South India and South-East Asia (especially Cambodia) but continued his research work particularly in the realm of iconometry.

For the Musée Guimet he produced three specialised brochure guides: *La sculpture indonésienne au Musée Guimet* (1971), *Musée Guimet. Art khmer* (1979) and *Des dieux, des rois et des hommes. Bas-reliefs d'Angkor Vat et du Bayon (Cambodge, XIIe siècle)* (1995) — tr. as *Of Gods, Kings and Men. Bas-reliefs of Angkor Wat and Bayon* (London 1995). He also supplied the text for *Cambodge. Angkor: Temples en péril* (Paris 1989) and several catalogues of South-East Asian art together with a number of relevant articles to periodicals.

Walter Couvreur (25 July 1914 - 17 September 1996)

Belonging to the tiny academic minority specialising in Tocharian studies, Prof. Dr Couvreur was Chairman of the Department of General and Comparative Linguistics at the University of Gent. Apart from general courses on the Indo-European languages, he also taught Gothic, Hittite and Tocharian, the last-named being related to the history of Buddhism in Central Asia. The importance of Sanskrit, Pāli and Tibetan parallel texts was also

emphasised.

Couvreur co-ordinated Tocharian studies with a view to establishing complete editions of the (mainly Buddhist) texts, fragments of which are scattered throughout European universities. Although he contributed numerous papers in this field, they remain largely inaccessible to students, being written for the most part in the author's native language, *viz.* 'De Tochaarse Karmavibhaṅga en de Baraboedoer (op Java)' (*Handelingen van het XVIII Vlaams Philologencongres*, Gent 1949), 'Het leven van de Boeddha volgens de Tochaarse bronnen' (*Handelingen XX*, Antwerp 1953), 'Nieuwe Koetsjische fragmenten van de Bibliothèque Nationale te Parijs' (*Handelingen XXI*, Louvain 1955), 'Koetsjische literaire fragmenten uit de Berlijnse Verzameling' (*Handelingen VIII der Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal-en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis*, 1954), 'Nieuwe Koetsjische fragmenten van het Aranemijātaka' (*Orientalia Gandensia I*, Leiden 1964), 'Sanskrit-Tochaarse Mātrceṭa-fragmenten' (*o.p.cit.*, III, 1966), 'Sanskrit-Tochaarse en Sanskrit-Koetsjische trefwoordenlijsten van de Dirghāgama (Dīgha-nikāya) (*ibid.*, IV, 1967), 'Boeddhistische Sanskritfragmenten in Koetsjische handschriften-verzameling ANAMNECIC (Gedenkboek E.A. Leemans)' (Bruges 1970) and 'Tochaarse Literatuur' (*Moderne Encyclopedie der Wereldliteratuur VIII*, Bussum 1974). The sole exceptions to this self-restricted linguistic policy are 'Le caractère Sarvāstivādin-Vaibhāṣika des fragments tochariens A d'après les marques et épithètes du Bouddha' (*Le Muséon* 59, 1946), 'Kutschische Vinaya- und Prātimokṣa-Fragmenten aus der Sammlung Hoernle' (*Asiatica. Festschrift Weller*, Leipzig 1954), (ed. & tr.) 'Die Fragmente Stein Ch.00316a und Hoernle H149.47 und 231' (*Kuhns Zeitschrift* 69, 1955) and 'Zu einigen sanskrit-kutschischen Listen von Stichtwortern aus dem Catusparisatṣūtra, Daśottarasūtra und Nidānasāmyukten' (*Pratidānam. F.B.J. Kuiper Festschrift*, The Hague 1968). A critical edition of the 'Kuchean and Tocharian Udānavarga Fragments', transcribed from the manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris) and British Library (London), was intended to appear in *Orientalia Gandensia VII* but seems to have been permanently shelved.

Władysław Misiewicz (11 April 1910 – 1 November 1997)

Although not a member of academe, Mr Misiewicz occupied a pivotal rôle in post-War Poland and acted as a magnet to those groping for a viable alternative philosophy of life to the extremes of an externally-imposed Communist régime and the nationalistic Roman Catholic Church.

Born in Lvov (or Lemberg as it was then under the Austro-Hungarian Empire), after matriculation he occupied a number of clerical posts, ending up as head of the reference library in his widow, Stefania's, home town of Radom (south of Warsaw). At the outbreak of war in 1939 he served as an officer-cadet in the cavalry but spent the duration in German PoW camps. Disillusioned with the Church, he was first attracted to Buddhism via Stanisław Michalski's translation of the Dhammapada (*Ścieżka Prawdy*, Łódź 1948). At the same time the late English Esperantist, Geo. H. Yoxon, sent him Buddhist literature in both languages, followed by the Buddha Rasmi series of pamphlets from the Colombo-based author, R. Semage, together with A.P. Buddhadatta's *New Pali Course*, a Buddharūpa and Buddhist flag (which flew from his apartment at Vesak). Books and magazines flowed from Ceylon and, later, from Misiewicz's numerous contacts in the Western world. With the inclusion of the PTS Text and Translation Series, Pāli canonical texts in German translation — apart from general studies in English and German and scores of rare pamphlets and journals in both languages, and every Polish work on the subject, his became the largest private collection of materials on Buddhism in Poland.

Endowed with determination and unwavering will power, devotion and a profound understanding of the Dhamma, his only physical means to disseminate this acquired knowledge was an ancient manual typewriter with which he painstakingly prepared and circulated *La Budhana Kontakto*, a quarterly newsletter in Esperanto, the unofficial *lingua franca* employed by the cognoscenti in Eastern Europe and even in Russia. From 1962 he also produced a Polish quarterly (also in typescript format), *Ehi Passiko*, which reached many family units throughout the country.

Proficient also in English, German and Pāli, between 1952-59

he compiled an elementary Pāli grammar based on Buddhadatta's *New Pali Course I*, C. Duroiselle's *Practical Grammar of the Pali Language* and Nyanatiloka's *Kleine systematische Pāli-Grammatik*. Out of gratitude to his teacher *in absentia* of Esperanto, the late Czech bhikkhu, Nyanasatta, he translated into Polish the former's sole full-length book, *Practical Buddhism*. He also translated Nyanaponika's classic primer, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation*, the essence of G.F. Allen *The Buddha's Philosophy* and numerous suttas and general literature issued by the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy.

Long before the reconstruction of Polish Buddhology (largely confined to Warsaw University) and the advent of (admittedly ephemeral) popular Buddhist circles (mainly Korean Zen and Tibetan Tantra in origin), it may not be an exaggeration to state that Mr Misiewicz acted as a beacon of knowledge and practice of Dhamma, regularly consulted by the media and fellow countrymen seeking advice. By his quiet, dignified, even austere and unassuming mode of life, he perfectly exemplified the Dhamma and, as such, warrants remembrance for almost a lifetime's service to Buddhism.

*Yathindakhilo paṭhavim̄ sito siyā —
catubhi vātehi asampakampiyo
Tathūpamam̄ sappurisam vadāni —
yo ariyasaccāni avecca passati* (Ratana Sutta 8)

Bhikkhu Nānajīvako (Cedomil Veljačić: 18 June 1915 — 28 December 1997)

After a long and painful illness, Bhikkhu Nānajīvako passed away peacefully at his home in the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, Talmage, California. His health had been failing for some years and he had occasionally undergone hospital treatment.

His life was selfless and eventful. He was born in Zagreb of Croat Catholic parentage, in the family of a court secretary. From his student days, he had been a man of austere life-style and a vegetarian. He studied philosophy in Zagreb and obtained his B.A. in 1939. After fulfilling temporary teaching positions at various places, for most of the turbulent period of the Second World War

Obituaries

he was a professor and the director of the gymnasium on Vis, a remote island in the Adriatic Sea.

In March 1944, his proficiency in English, French, German and Italian, combined with the evacuation of the local civilian population, took him with the new Yugoslav representation first to Italy and then to Germany. In Bonn, he studied Sanskrit at the university and started his translations. It may be said that his formal career as an Orientalist began in 1955 when he published excerpts from his rendition of the *Dhammapada*, the first translation from Pāli into any South Slavic language.

Towards the end of the fifties, he collaborated with (today Academicians) S. Petrović and R. Katičić in establishing what was later to become the Department of General Linguistics and Oriental Studies at Zagreb Philosophy Faculty. In 1961, he returned to his *alma mater* to become the first Lecturer (later Assistant Professor) at the Chair of the Philosophy of Asian Peoples, a position created especially for him, which in effect initiated the serious, sustained academic study of this discipline in the then Yugoslavia.

He received his doctorate in 1962 for 'A Comparative Study in Indian and in European Philosophy — The Ancient World'. Invited to lecture in India as a Visiting Professor in 1963, he delivered lectures and conducted seminars in Calcutta, Madras, Delhi and Shantiniketan for almost three years. In 1966 he was ordained as a sāmanera in the Theravāda lineage and as a bhikkhu two years later, the first among the South Slavs, and he spent more than twenty years in Sri Lanka continuing his scholarly activities. His early monastic experiences are recorded in his *Pisma s pustinjačkog otoka* ('Letters from the Island Hermitage', Zagreb 1986).

Proven an educator of outstanding merit and a prolific writer, he has to his credit a vast output of writings which have been largely kept in print, most of which were written — and this is not to be forgotten — under very trying circumstances. His studies appeared in many esteemed publications, such as *Forum*, *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, *Kant-Studien*, *Main Currents in Modern Thought*, *Praxis* and *Schopenhauer-Jahrbuch*. His translations include Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* (Zagreb

1971), as well as an abridged translation of the Thera- and Therīgāthā (Sarajevo 1977¹, 1990²) and a complete rendition of the Dhammapada (Zagreb 1990) from the Theravāda canonical texts.

His full-length works comprise *Filozofija istočnih naroda* ('Philosophy of Eastern Peoples', 2 vols, Zagreb 1958¹, 1983⁴) ; *Schopenhauer and Buddhism* (Kandy 1970¹, 1988²); *Budizam* ('Buddhism', Belgrade 1977¹, 1990²); *Razmeda azijskih filozofija* ('Frontier of Asian Philosophies', 2 vols, Zagreb 1978); *Indijska i iranska etika* ('Indian and Iranian Ethics', an anthology jointly edited with Prof. R. Ivezović, Sarajevo 1980); *Od Nepala do Cejlona* ('From Nepal to Ceylon', Subotica 1981); *Ethos spoznaje u indijskoj i u evropskoj filozofiji* ('Ethos of Knowledge in Indian and in European Philosophy', Belgrade 1982); *Studies in Comparative Philosophy* (Colombo 1983); and *A Buddhist Philosophy of Religion* (ed. by S. Akpinar and S. Gilliatt, Burlingame, Ca. 1992).

In the twilight of his life, his health deteriorated substantially and his daughter, Snjezana Akpinar, cared for him, bringing him in 1989 to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. Although he had played an active part in the cultural life of his country of origin throughout his stay in Sri Lanka, with the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia he was no more involved in public life. After a series of strokes in 1993 he was forced to cut back his activities completely.

His critical and relaxed manner à propos academic affairs and his sense of humour endeared him to friends, colleagues and readers alike. The decease of the doyen of Oriental studies among the South Slavs has left a void that will be difficult to fill for years to come.

Slightly amended version of a notice by Siniša Dokić.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Christian Lindtner's use of the word 'precanonical' ('The Problem of Precanonical Buddhism', BSR 14, 2) is unsatisfactory. After all everything that has come down to us could be so described until its initial recitation, and given some evidence that discourses were memorised as they were delivered a pre-canonical/canonical division seems strictly meaningless. A better choice of adjectives might be 'primitive' for the period of Gotama's ministry and 'proto-canonical' for the whole era of oral transmission. Behind the verbiage the real issue of course is how far the teaching attributed to the founder of Buddhism is historically authentic.

The anomalies discussed by Lindtner in this respect, particularly passages supposedly more in accord with Upaniṣadic belief in unchanging realities than with the rest of the Nikāyas/Āgamas, could be explained either as a difference of outlook between Gotama and his successors or in terms of the development of his own views over some fifty years. The first runs counter to the scrupulous authentication of discourses by reference to the places and people involved and frequent stern rebukes for any misrepresentation. The second has the merit of suggesting both why the anomalous passages are included and why they are infrequent. Of course extravagant extensions of the narrative material did occur but I see no difficulty in imagining that the Sangha would have permitted this for missionary purposes and lay consumption whilst carefully retaining unaltered anything thought to originate with their founder.

The transcendental states known as the *arūpa jhānas* may exemplify the kind of evolution I have in mind. They form an ascending series in which 'space', 'consciousness', 'nothingness' and 'neither perceiving nor not-perceiving' are directly experienced as featureless infinities. The intriguing thing about this list is that the last pair are specifically associated with two pre-enlightenment teachers and attainment of the first two at an even earlier date could easily have convinced the young Gotama of the truth of Upaniṣadic teaching. However, the Suttas don't treat them in this

way and M I, 352 in particular stresses that they are no more than skilful constructs, useful in rooting out the *āsavas* but transient in themselves and apparently without cognitive significance. So could this be a case of the mature teacher making a naturalistic re-evaluation of experiences understood differently many years before?

David Evans

REVIEW ARTICLE

A. Haviland-Nye

ABHIDHAMMA STUDIES AT THE BRITISH BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION, LONDON, AND A REVIEW OF

A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma. The Abhidhammattha Sangaha. Pāli Text, Translation & Explanatory Guide, Bhikkhu Bodhi, General Editor. Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy 1993, 432 pp. \$20.00.

Studies at the British Buddhist Association in London have mostly been oriented towards Abhidhamma, hence our considerable interest in and gratitude for Bhikkhu Bodhi's new edition of the Abhidhammattha Sangaha (hereafter abbreviated to ABS). ABS is an icon of pedagogy of complete Buddhist teaching from a flourishing period of Abhidhamma studies in mediaeval Ceylon.

Our study classes originated from 1967 with two adult evening literary institute courses organised by your reviewer. These were first constructed from the content provided by Asian Buddhist guest speakers who lectured on main syllabus topics. From this corpus of traditional teaching, founded mostly on the Visuddhimagga (abbrev. Vism), a systematic and progressively integrated study programme was constructed.

Those newly approaching the Buddha's teaching in the post-War decades, before the advent of mass popular 'Buddhism', were mostly professionally educated people. They tended to be acquainted with prominent Western Buddhists by virtue of the paucity in numbers and consequently the particular areas of attention each was given within their shared interest. Your reviewer knew of Ven. Nārada's (Vajirāma) Abhidhamma activity and the drafts of translations of Abhidhammattha Sangaha discussed in London with the late Robert Iggleden, whose charts of it in his wooden-covered book were familiar to visitors entertained by himself and his wife. Their work in Abhidhamma led to producing the Pali Text Society's translation of Vibhaṅga with Ven. U Thittila. This invaluable work has now really come to life with the more recent translation of its Commentary by

Nānamoli/Cousins-Shaw, the latter work contributing further to ABS source knowledge.

At the British Buddhist Association we found quite soon that basing courses on material extracted from Vism presupposed a prior knowledge of the Buddhist classification of mental and material states and their ways of procedure. ABS material was accordingly introduced for study ahead of Vism and this method has been the foundation of all subsequent teaching to the present. Our basic courses have been more recently revised to incorporate crucial premises gleaned mostly from our more recent study of Paṭṭhāna. Without this, Western cultural notions are still too much fed into the reading of Buddhism and its absence produces a corrupt paradigm of reality inconsistent with itself.

Abhidhamma ideas are introduced to students through Jayasuriya's book *The Psychology and Philosophy of Buddhism*. This book was the breakthrough in your reviewer's initial meaningful comprehension of Abhidhamma, whose presentation by Asian bhikkhus, unaware of Western patterns of thought, was and probably still is generally incoherent to newcomers. Jayasuriya presents the topics of each ABS chapter in a manner comprehensible to the serious Western reader first attempting to access Abhidhamma. It remains your reviewer's recommended introduction. ABS is then presented to our students alongside the corresponding chapters of Jayasuriya — and the first glimmers of comprehension appear. Those who get this far are likely to proceed with long-term enthusiasm with the Buddha's teaching.

We have toyed with the idea of approaching Abhidhamma firstly from translations of Dhammasaṅgani, Vibhaṅga, Paṭṭhāna and their Commentaries. The gain may be a better understanding through attention to all the Triplets and Couplets rather than an overemphasised evaluation of the first. But we fear that incomprehension may result if the procedures of thought processes are not known in advance. This commentarial material seems best accessed firstly through ABS since its essential principles are so very clearly articulated there.

As a distinct and unique culture, classical Buddhist knowledge can only be satisfactorily accessed in terms of itself, not by comparison with another body of knowledge or standing on the

ground of other cultural patterns of thought. It offers a complete view of reality and culture of living within it. It is unlikely that anyone outside a living Buddhist tradition will ever know much of this without first immersing themselves in works of pedagogy. ABS is well suited to this purpose.

The best way to gain real fluency in the Buddha's teaching is to rehearse and memorise texts from childhood as do some of the Burmese sāmañeras and bhikkhus. This establishes patterns of thought necessary for ready access to meaning at a later stage. The art of memorising is not entirely absent in the West; musicians, particularly the French, still commit to memory the corpus of their repertoire. Failing memory, a system of recall has to be devised so as to avoid too much 'hit and miss' in finding references to determine what was originally intended in passages under scrutiny. We do notice that the teachers who go first to the Abhidhamma Pitaka itself also know ABS extremely well, which suggests its terse summation serves an overall recall function rather well. On balance it would still seem to us to be the most practical textual introduction in order to give an overall view in a reasonably manageable time. But we do add three provisos: (1) the *citta* scheme in Dhammasaṅgani be followed, as modified slightly by Dharmasena in Wheel 63/64; (2) the nature of *rūpa* is explained before the reading of ABS commences; and (3) the underlying ideas of Paṭṭhāna must be filled out by a tutor since ABS is quite inadequate for an introduction to this symbiotic scheme of contingent ephemeral reality by way of Relations/Correspondences (*paccayas*).

The idea of Correspondences was a live issue from the earliest Reformation times in Europe, articulated well by the widely esteemed Renaissance Agrippa in the 1530s and through occult, alchemist and mystical thinkers down to Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophists of the late nineteenth century. The latter turned away from the Christian-oriented model to that of Buddhism. Knowledge of Buddhist Correspondences was just emerging in the 1890s with the first exploration of Abhidhamma by Europeans, led by another woman, Mrs C.A.F. Rhys Davids. The broad Western idea of Correspondences is much the same as that of the *paccayas*. Similar motivations of natural law are

variously found in all conditioned phenomena and such that any reference point taken can be defined in terms of everything else related to it by means of these Correspondences. ABS recognises four basic groups of these from Paṭṭhāna's twenty-four (expanded to fifty-six and then on infinitely). Blavatsky suspected that Buddhists identified the Correspondences convincingly. A century later we now know somewhat more about the nature of these.

Excepting courses for public institutions, our systematic teaching is now given only to those who also wish to practise the Dhamma whilst undergoing their formal studies. The material used is the same as in public institutions but the attitude of the students and their motivation to learn is now of heightened consideration. This avoids wastage of resources directed towards those dropping out, a luxury of our past when we had bhikkhus devoted to servicing mundane social needs rather than directing access to a way of Enlightenment. 'Practice' is based on our specific format of devotions and meditation, developed for lay Buddhists living within the norms of British society.

It is not practical to study Abhidhamma by oneself in isolation. After individual reading one needs group discussion amongst students of compatible knowledge to articulate the meaning of passages studied. At the British Buddhist Association we meet for this purpose weekly. The cumulative effect is substantial in widening the scope of enquiry and consideration. Additionally, it is necessary for a group to consult periodically with a higher authority more proficient in Abhidhamma to unravel the increasing number of problems encountered as one advances and to ensure the group does not wander off into its own wayward interpretations. The dangers of reading into texts what is not there and failing to notice the significance of what is there are ever-present.

Asian bhikkhus assert that Abhidhamma must be read in Pāli to gain the correct meaning. This is to underrate the problem. Misunderstanding is primarily a problem of deeply engrained patterns of thought long established in one's historical cultural milieu rather than a linguistic one of translation. Because English is formed from concepts alien to the Buddha's teaching, the latter cannot be expressed in the language of the former without con-

stant qualification. Hence 'exact' translations can be less true to the meaning than 'free' translations. With both ABS and Vism we enjoy the luxury of both more word-for-word and more free translations; the former from the publishers Buddhist Publication Society and the latter from the Pali Text Society's earlier age when literary considerations were of heightened concern. We understand that even the Burmese at home suffer the problem of finding the right word in Pāli translation! Certainly all Pāli terms should be retained in parentheses after translation. The text of the new edition of ABS succeeds well in this respect but regrettably this is not followed through in the Tables and Charts, which are in practice those parts of the book most referred to. The individual reader must render in this deficiency himself, conveniently on double-size photocopies for own use. Slackness in failing to think in Pāli terminology is a cause of misinterpretation because there is always a lurking tendency to use one's own cultural meaning of a native word instead of a Buddhist technical meaning. Noting a Pāli word in one's mind as one reads gives pause for thought of the technical meaning. Your reviewer feels that English readers' time spent in learning Pāli much beyond technical terms, basic grammar and syntax will not yield much resolution of the specific problems of meaning. It is not merely that the individual words do not translate well from Pāli to English but that the ideas they represent do not.

We note a further point: the philosophical requirements of English thought call for consideration of matters seemingly unquestioned in traditional Abhidhamma culture. And some of these matters are highly relevant to readers today. Without resolution of Western readers' requirements Abhidhamma can seem so incomplete as to be lost in irrelevance. Some of these are considered below.

In some quarters it is fashionable to discount Abhidhamma and the Commentaries composed by Abhidhammikas as less authentic of the Buddha's teaching than Sutta. The resulting one-Pitaka enthusiasts find it possible to read into Sutta almost anything of their choice — and they do and construct their own 'Buddhisms' which reflect their individual dispositions and aberrations. We think those who read the Abhidhamma Commen-

taries are likely to conclude that the basic relevant material to the three most essential texts of the Abhidhamma used as the basis for ABS, Dhammasaṅgani, Vibhaṅga and Paṭṭhāna, were at least in essence current at the same time as the text, for the latter is frequently not intelligible without the former and it often appears arbitrary as to what went into the text and what into Commentary. The test may have been that what was considered fixed and unchangeable went into the text, whilst explanations that could grow over time, as detail was worked out, went into the Commentary. The fact that there is a growth and refinement in the Commentaries is to be expected in a virile philosophy with other growth in competing ideas around. And more can be expected as Abhidhamma becomes better known and interacts with contemporary philosophies. To those who make some attempt to understand the thinking of Abhidhamma the very opposite to dismissal of text and Commentary results; rather, an impression of awe arises towards those extraordinary people who developed the detail of the Buddha's incredible paradigm of reality, working without the aid of paper, pencil and charts. It is a monumental achievement. It is an analysis of all mental and material states and classified for use by specific people engaged on a specific task: adepts progressing to Nibbāna. Abhidhamma can be recommended as a good discipline for those outside formal Vinaya, and even better for those inside, since it brings precision to mental development, an antidote to lack of systematic attention and radical reflection.

The nine chapters of ABS state and classify all *cittas* (I), *cetasikas* (II), *rūpa dhammas* and Nibbāna (VI), procedures of thought process in life (IV) and connecting lives (V), plus miscellaneous concepts required for understanding those processes (III). Chapter VII effectively connects lists encountered in both Abhidhamma and Sutta with their detailed *citta-cetasika* composition. Chapter VIII charts Paṭiccasamuppāda and reduces the *paccayas* of Paṭṭhāna to a smaller fourfold grouping; and Chapter IX summarises the practices leading to Insight as a thumbnail sketch index to Vism as the detailed meditator's guide through seven stages of purification.

ABS is expressed in aphorisms for an overall view of the

structure and processes of Buddhist Insight. They need exegesis. This has historically been provided by many Commentaries on the book itself. Bodhi uses two of them as the basis of his *Guide* appended to each section of the text as a judicious and illuminating explanation. Bodhi's *Guide* is short with style only a little less formal than the Commentaries themselves. Although brilliantly clear and attractive additional basic exegesis is required for students new to Abhidhamma; and for veterans still struggling with Chapter VI! We have found the following contemporary works indispensable: Dharmasena, Jayasuriya and Karunadasa (see below for details). Paṭṭhāna is now well serviced with its own *Guide* by the late Burmese Ven. U Nārada.

As the standard starting point for Abhidhamma studies, Bodhi's edition should be the first to be read. For each aphorism Bodhi gives the Pāli text, translation and then guide, i.e. editor's explanation distilled mostly from Abhidhammatthavibhāvanī-Tīkā (12th C) and Paramathadipani-Tīkā by Ledi Sayadaw (1897). This order is essential for first-time study of individual paragraphs. It is a great improvement on the Nārada edition which is hopelessly presented for a first-time reader. Having some familiarity with ABS we like to have translations of the text alone in front of us so that we can quickly recapitulate the flow of procedures discussed. The PTS edition, *Compendium of Philosophy*, is good for translation of this. It also presents 142 pages of notes in its Introductory Essay and over thirty Pāli terms discussed in the appendices which are useful on subsequent readings of ABS.

The practical worth of Bhikkhu Bodhi's edition of ABS for the Abhidhamma student cannot be overestimated. Both translations and *Guide* are in impeccably idiomatic English without literary distractions. His *Guide* is so lucid that it is worth reading even for those who do not particularly wish to devote much time to the detail of ABS but wish to enjoy Bodhi's literary skills in illuminating and uplifting his readers. We have come to know him for this as readers of the periodic Buddhist Publication Society *Newsletter*, where his editorial column has reached the status of our equivalent to the sermons of John Donne. His breathtakingly brilliant summation of the Buddha's paradigm of

reality in a single paragraph on p.88 is good reason enough for acquiring this edition. And readers will find many more of personal choice.

ABS is called a comprehensive manual. Traditionally it is said to need reading nine times. It is indeed a work for constant reference for Insight practitioners and Dhamma teachers. But it is comprehensive only to the extent of acknowledging the main topics of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and is just a terse summation of these, with some commentarial source material added to increase contextual comprehension. This edition started life as an update on Nārada's and its presentation and choice of commentarial content, with a superb general Introduction, have improved the former manyfold such that it is a complete reworking. The generous number of charts is welcome, clear and sometimes familiar from elsewhere. No educated Buddhist should be without it. This is so even if the more direct approach to Abhidhamma is taken by reading the texts and commentaries of the Canon themselves as the first approach, since ABS collects together the threads and summarises the main areas of consideration. There is both gain and loss in summary reductions — but with the luxury available we should avail ourselves of the advantage and later become aware of the loss of breadth by re-grouping (e.g. *cittas*, Ch.I) and reducing (e.g. the universal Correspondences of Paṭṭhāna, Ch.VIII). ABS (Ch.II) has the superiority of fully enumerating the states of integral consciousness, e.g. specifying all the individual 'or whatever' states in each *citta* instead of having to work them out for oneself as in Dhammasaṅgaṇī. But, oh! had Anuruddha not wearied into sketchiness by the time he got to Chapter VIII what more ready understanding we would now have of Paṭṭhāna!

Bodhi numbers the *cittas* following the ABS text for chart reference purposes. We have not been able to come to terms with the new numbers since we are used to Dharmasena's numbering system since 1963, following Bhikkhu Bodhi's own Society's Wheel 63/64. Dharmasena uses the first Triplet development in Dhammasaṅgaṇī as his basis for charting and consecutively numbering *cittas* (almost exactly) and we have thus far found his system preferable. Dhammasaṅgaṇī itself merely numbers each

specific group and it is these that the Burmese commit to memory. We now we have three numbering systems running!

Bodhi's Table of Contents is referenced to each paragraph of text. The student will find speedy reference even easier if these and further sub-headings of personal choice are manuscripted onto the top of each left-hand page throughout the book. As text has been arranged with increased paragraph numbering since the earlier edition, the Index can be expanded to manuscript in the corresponding paragraph and page numbers in the Nārada and PTS editions when these are used for comparison. Those familiar with Nārada will know how difficult it is to search out particular items. It is worth the effort of cross-referencing since Nārada is not redundant. His notes are not directly incorporated in the new edition (although both editors have used similar sources) and some of his comments are worthy of the more detailed reader's attention. He attends to individual words; Bodhi more to the overall meaning.

Bodhi's edition is of such excellence that your reviewer can but urge you to obtain it, read it and enjoy its detailed study. It has stimulated Abhidhamma students at the British Buddhist Association in many areas and some are now cited below.

CITTA. The experience of consciousness is clearly defined for Buddhists as 'seeing', 'hearing', etc., 'ideation'. But many reading Sutta alone long retain an uncertainty as to the adequacy of this definition. The remedy lies in Abhidhamma.

Citta is used as the key term for Buddhist Consciousness in ABS. Unfortunately it can produce confusion when using merely the single English equivalent 'consciousness'. Our language is not subtle enough in this respect to distinguish meanings of *citta* between 'factorial consciousness' (the six classifications of *viññāna* as above) and 'integral consciousness', *citta-cetasika dhammā*, as more clearly used in the Abhidhamma itself to indicate the simultaneous integration of all four mental *khandhas* in each complete thought moment. And it is lack of this latter knowledge that is the missing link to Sutta-alone readers, a failure to recognise the full import of the well-translated word 'Aggregates'. When Nāṇamoli visited this problem in Paṭisambhidāmagga he used 'cognizance' for *citta* in its usual *citta-cetasika* meaning in

order to well distinguish it from *viññāna* and *mano*.

There can also be confusion between 'consciousness' as a complete mental process (*cittavīthi*) and *citta* as the individual moments and even sub-moments (*khana*) within the process. Bodhi diffuses this latter problem by distinguishing 'mind-moments' from the whole process, e.g. p.156. We prefer 'mental moments' to emphasise process and avoid the rather fixed notion that 'mind' indicates to Western students.

PAKINNAKA. The former standard translation of the six miscellaneous *cetasikas* was Particulars. It was never illuminating since 'on particular occasions' suggested a few special ones. Bodhi's change to Occasionals is worse since 'occasional' in the vernacular emphasises infrequency. These *cetasikas* are actually present in most *cittas* as the chart on pp.112/113 shows, but not invariably so. Why not use 'As Appropriate' or 'Appropriate' group?

It is good that Bodhi draws attention to the matter of titles of *cetasika* groups, as it makes us consider the matter, but we would have wished that he attempt change with the standard Beautiful for *sobhana*. This has a cringing tang of slothful effeminacy about it when associated with personal qualities. May we venture Purity/Pure Universals as an alternative or possibly Clarity/Clear?

PARAMATTHAS. These are the four ultimate categories of Abhidhamma whose direct knowledge is the fruition of Vipassanā. Bodhi (p.25f.) takes an extreme view of pinning them down as 'ultimate realities'. A reality has intrinsic nature (*sabhāva*). This has signified to us that *dhammas* each have characteristics not shared by others, *and nothing more*. Bodhi asserts more: he endows them with 'concrete essence', which your reviewer fears readers will identify as indistinguishable from a rarefied Cartesian substance.

This goes further than Nārada who sought to avoid the bivalence of the substantive and nominalist paradigms of reality by delineating *paramatthas* as 'abstract truth', the recognition of elements that can be individually recognised but not perceived by the senses. He does not suggest that 'abstract' means 'absolute'. His translation of text indicates *paramatthas* just as the furthest point of analysis. Thus Nārada follows the meaning assigned by S.Z. Aung and Mrs Rhys Davids and both these earlier editions are

confirmed by the most exacting translator of all, R. Iggleden, in his translation and exegesis of Chapter I. Their views are consonant with our reading from Paṭṭhāna, reality as mere symbiotic existence. We suggest that we must rest content with a Sophic agnosticism as to absolute reality or otherwise of *paramatthas*, for we cannot go beyond limitations of data impinging on our six bases, any more than a fish is capable of knowing the nature of water. To go beyond is to enter fantasy.

But does a sceptical epistemology undermine Vipassanā whose function is to transmute conceptual life into direct observation and knowledge of the ultimate categories? And does a relative view of the nature of the elements of those categories, the *dhammas*, leave *dhammas* in ultimate analysis merely as conceptual devices? Popular meditation teachers suggest not, but in the precise Abhidhamma we see a paradox when a 'relative' position is taken, and one that we do not at present see clearly resolved. Suggesting, as Bodhi does, an absoluteness of 'concrete essence' of *dhammas* does not convince. It has two further problems: (1) it does not conform to a view of Samsāra being the corruption of perfection of the Middle Way of reality *between* Being and Non-Being; and (2) when applied to the fourth *paramatta*, Nibbāna, it presents a mystical transcendental substance as 'object' of *citta* instead of the substantive state turning in on itself and being mirrored precisely as object, the bivalent duality of Samsāra thus resolved. Bodhi, from his *Guide* on p.136, would appear to reject this notion of Nibbāna in that he asserts that a *citta* cannot become its own object.

ETHICAL PREMISE. The Buddha seems immersed in an idea current in the sixth century BCE that misfortune comes about because of evil done previously by the recipient of the misfortune. Zoroaster's twin gods of good and evil were widely known. In that era, too, the first Temple was destroyed in Jerusalem (586 BCE). Jeremiah lamented 'on the miserable estate of Jerusalem by reason of her sin'. And the idea continues to our own time when it is assumed that the notions of good and evil are built into the very fabric of reality. The Manichaean dichotomy still pervades the public mind; Satan is more readily identified than god. Politicians appeal to the Church — as official

guardians of public morality — to adjudicate on ethical questions, e.g., particularly to endorse their military exploits and sanction their civil laws. The Buddha replaced the power of Abraham's single angry god by the impersonal law of kamma which directly links the recipient of misfortune with 'his' corresponding malfeasance.

The whole Abhidhamma system proceeds in its first Triplet of Mātikā from this premise: '*Kusala dhammā, akusala dhammā, avyākatā dhammā*'. The Buddha's unique contribution, and that of his few brilliant associates and successors, to the nature of reality was to propose a *mechanism* by which, for example, the sins of the Jews (mental activity) brought about the destruction of the Temple (matter) rather than a vengeful omnipotent god granting the means of success to enemies. But we do wonder whether the very notion of ethics we have inherited from Judaeo-Christian culture, more than just the classification of particular acts between good and evil, is a somewhat ill match with the foundation of the notion of *kusala* in the Buddhist system. There is a tendency to assume that the first Triplet is identical with the Western notion of ethics and that all practical ethical questions can be slotted into ABS Chapter I classification. This cannot be done readily, since Western ethical questions seem very broad societal ones of public welfare compared with the subtle individual states propounded in Abhidhamma, which are geared to classification primarily for adepts striving for private liberation.

Although 'ethics' is clearly central to Buddhism, it is interesting to note the paucity of specific books on Buddhist ethics. The subject is poorly addressed and inadequately dealt with in what has appeared thus far. This may be due to the failure to recognise the fundamental difference in both purpose and approach between Buddhist and Western cultures in what both are accustomed to call 'ethics'. This may be another case (along with those of ontology, epistemology and soteriology) of the classifications of one culture simply not fitting those of another. Early Buddhism is a complete system and can only be adequately addressed in its own terms. We take an example of the importance of this matter: ethics in public policy in multi-cultural societies. Whilst it is possible to determine the way in which Buddhists

should direct their own activities, there is a problem when asked to determine matters of public policy to which non-Buddhists are also subject.

Buddhists generally consider that particular acts are ethically relative to a specific person, situate in his social groupings and personal circumstances but absolute in direction towards or away from Nibbāna. We come back to the issue of reality. In Christian and Muslim cultures ethics flow from absolute reality and so can be firmly fixed as absolute. These cultures can thus rule all beings by legal sanction. If the world cannot be considered as more than tentative, as we suggest is the Buddhist position, so also must be its ensuing ethical implications. If this is the case Buddhist ethics can be justifiably recognised by public policy only amongst Buddhists. Take the issue of vivisection in medical research. Buddhists recoil from this as unethical. Just so, for a Buddhist intentionally to kill, even when subsidiary to the predominant motive, leads away from Nibbāna. But not to a Christian who may sincerely believe killing a virtuous act for the advancement of the worthy primary goal of medical research. The killing of Salman Rushdie by a Buddhist would lead to future misfortune, whereas the same act by a Muslim would lead him to great reward. Are these similar acts of killing, founded on their appropriate states, *kusala* for Christians and Muslims and *akusala* for Buddhists? Here is the ethical clash in formulating public policy with more than one cultural representation in a jurisdiction. This issue highlights the necessity of establishing whether there are any absolute realities.

It may, however, be that the very notion of the Middle Way itself bucks the bivalent notion of relative/absolute being. If the Middle Way is unequivocal, Buddhists ways of conduct (albeit different from the foundation of 'ethics' in Western culture) should be asserted as public policy, whatever the proportional representation of Buddhists in a jurisdiction. The world as experienced by all, save Arahants, is a corruption of forces veering one side or the other of the Middle and whose resolution in perfection lies precisely there. Jurisprudence should, if this position is upheld, aim at the Middle for all.

'Absolute' ethics, the certainty of particular acts fixed as right or wrong, essentially derives from monotheism; absolute god, ab-

solute ethical sanctions and proscriptions. Gibbon observes in *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* that it is only the adherents of monotheistic religions who actively promoted social discord in the Roman Empire. The history of monotheistic religions since then has continued to display the magnitude and extremes of unsatisfactory behaviour by their devotion to genocide and wanton destruction of things cherished by others. Indeed, the very essence of monotheistic religion requires its practitioners to create disharmony and agitation and imposes their ideals on all. And in the end 'all' means not only their own state but all others — world domination. Short of monopoly, monotheistic religions are therefore incompatible with harmony within a multi-cultural nation and peaceful relations internationally.

KAMMIC PROCESS. Unlike Bodhi (p.234), we take the first six chapters as the first complete section of ABS, rather than the first five, in order that we may include *rūpa* and Nibbāna. *Cittā* cannot be fully considered without *rūpa* since in the kammic process, *cittā* gives rise to resultant *cittas* and matter. It is the historical failure of Anglo-German Buddhism to connect consciousness to matter that has caused the kammic process to be rejected by Westerners and, therefore, why Buddhism has failed to be more widely accepted. Without explanation of the whole process, kamma remains in the realm of superstition. Sutta treats kamma by assertion and faith. Abhidhamma seeks to explain, albeit in a manner which is still not fully comprehended. It is essential that matter be dealt with as part and parcel of the conscious process and, indeed, the text of ABS does so.

NIBBĀNA. Furthermore, Nibbāna must also be included for complete consideration of the mental processes because it manifests life within the context of the *cittā-cetasika* complex. ABS has, therefore, its first complete portion at the end of Chapter VI. Moreover, without Nibbāna, *cittā*, *cetasika* and *rūpa* have no footing. The Aggregates are predicated by it. But this does not mean that Nibbāna is a metaphysical ground. We recoil from the notion of Nibbāna as a single absolute reality as a sophisticated variant of transcendental monotheism, a notion as hard for Westerners to root out as is ground elder to gardeners. There is no noumenon independent of perception behind the Aggregates

nor behind Nibbāna (as 'Object' in ABS, Ch.III, experienced by the eight persons). *Lokuttara* simply means beyond the world, without the addition of a gratuitously imposed other-world entity. ABS (Bodhi, p.325) classifies Nibbāna clearly within *nāma*, a point often missed. It is an active ingredient of the mental life of the adept's practice. It has an omnipresence when the central states of the Middle Way are fully engaged as the duality between Being and Non-Being is overcome. We feel ABS suggests that Nibbāna has nothing to do with mysticism, transcendence, supernatural access to *a priori* knowledge, but rather is an attempt to bring a rational explanation to the experiences generally called spiritual (*lokuttara*) by way of a psychological theory applied to its philosophical assumptions and shows how these experiences may be systematically developed. If not 'absolute' it is a very superior way.

RŪPA is translated by Bodhi as 'matter' in its primal usage. The reader must understand that this is to be read quite differently from what is normally thought of as matter in the West. The translation of *rūpa* is used in a specific Buddhist way. It would, therefore, be better to use Matter with an upper case 'M' to forewarn of a Buddhist rather than a conventional English meaning. 'Materiality' seems to be the latest word elsewhere to attempt resolution of this problem. We wonder whether in the end we shall return to the ungainly 'corporeality', or even earlier 'form' or, rather more completely, 'Form etc.'. The latter has the attraction, on the one hand, of recognising no more than impingement on the six bases and the positive advantage, on the other hand, of admitting *rūpa* as object of the mental-base. Thus the complete circuit of meanings of *rūpa* is permitted by 'Form etc.', including the reality of beings of Rūpaloka cognised by the mental bases.

We identify one of the fundamental obstacles to comprehension of the Buddha's teaching as inability to lay aside the Western cultural view that consciousness is a subset of matter. To most, reality is encompassed by matter alone, however fine parts of it, such as 'the mind', may be. There is a public inability to accept §2 of ABS that the 'immaterial' is precisely just that and discrete from matter. This is why it is of the greatest importance to detach the Buddhist meaning of *rūpa* from the conventional view of matter. Failure to do so makes it difficult to displace the

notion of a Creation from the rational Buddhist explanation of momentary appearance between origination and dissolution in a causal stream dependent largely on those immaterial forces. To succeed necessitates seeing these appearances very differently from conventional matter.

Buddhists, like most, conceive matter as an atomic structure. But the ultimate categories elucidated in Abhidhamma, with *kamma* and *citta* (past and present mental activity) adding causal dimensions to momentary phenomena, provide a radically different view from Physics. The injection of volitional mental activity is by far the more significant input to the creation of matter from the Buddhist viewpoint. So far as beings are concerned, their artefacts and managed environment are mind-made and of predominant significance to them. *Manopubbangamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā, manomayā* (Dhp 1). There cannot be much Insight without fully knowing these things. This is why it is vital to take the first six chapters of ABS together rather than pausing for breath after the first five alone. (The fact that there is a tendency to do so because the Buddhist concept of *rūpa* is so abstruse to us is no excuse for abandoning the effort to penetrate the minds of the ancient Abhidhammikas.)

In an essentially secular materialistic world, elucidation of matter is thus of crucial importance to the presentation of the Dhamma. This is very difficult since the popular science-led view of physical elements alone is very firmly held. To say there are other dimensions — *kamma* and *citta* — is the point where the public leaves us. Although subatomic physics seems to suggest particles appearing momentarily in a quantum vacuum merely in symbiotic relation as in the Buddha's teaching, classical physics still conditions the public mind. And this sits on an Eternalist view of the permanency of creation, a 'real' existence, not a (perhaps wholly) symbiotic one.

Another problem, flowing from an inadequate understanding of *rūpa* by equating it with a conventional notion of matter, is belief that any 'spirit' worlds are merely subjective extensions of human internal rumination and fantasy. However, 'spirit' worlds are distinctly *rūpa* in canonical Buddhist culture and so objective to the mental-base extrasensory perception. As such they have no

less reality than sense avenue experience. But this is not a recommendation to place much attention here since there is a practical problem of confirmation of reality of specific beings when there is an absence of common perception of them, rendering it uncertain in sorting objective fact from subjective fantasy. This was the problem with angels' frequent appearance in mediaeval Europe and now also with aliens emerging from the UFO movement, fact or fancy. There is an uncomfortable resemblance of these with the 'spirit' worlds of the Pāli Canon! Those inbred with Western materialism find it unacceptable that *rūpa* (in part) can become object of mental-base consciousness; the concept of it is as far as they will admit. Buddhist attention should be focused here, but practice is best left to those on the firmest footing, e.g., Arahants.

In Chapter VI, *nipphanna* receives the novel, and rather ugly, translation of 'concrete' for those eighteen *dhammas* with intrinsic qualities and 'non-concrete' for those quasi-*dhammas* associated therewith. Could 'Tangible/Intangible', in their conceptual rather than literal sense, be less offensive choices? Alternatively, Bodhi's own *Guide* on p.235 leads one to suggest Intrinsic and Abstract for the 18/10 *rūpadhamma* division. The problem with Abstract is that it can imply either higher or lower degrees of truth, in this case lower.

Without further explanation, as in Karunadasa's *Buddhist Analysis of Matter* (see below), ABS on *rūpa* is indigestible and unintelligible. Yet it is absolutely vital to the comprehension of the Buddha's paradigm of reality. After all, matter is what more or less everyone acknowledges. Buddhists are bidden to know its nature since this is an integral part of 'practice'. Insight comprises direct knowing of all *cittas, cetasikas*, the 18 tangible/intrinsic/concrete *rūpa dhammas*, and Nibbāna.

PATTHĀNA. The novice reader should be warned that, like *rūpa*, the Section on Patthāna is unintelligible without a prior knowledge of the structure of its system. The student may have an inkling of something lurking that he should know about from references elsewhere, e.g. in Vism, to the *nidānas* of *paticcasamuppāda* being related by way of the twenty-four *paccayas* of Patthāna. ABS merely recapitulates in a simplified way some-

thing of the relationships of conditioning and conditioned processes and forces interacting to produce the world that impinges on our six bases. Reproducing Ledi Sayadaw's Table 8.4 on the synthesis of conditions, reducing the twenty-four *paccayas* to the four new heads, is a graceful gift to those students who come to study Paṭṭhāna later and in the past have had to struggle to resolve this recategorisation by ABS for themselves.

GENERAL SUMMATION

ABS has now gone through three full English translations. S.Z. Aung and Mrs C.A.F. Rhys David, Ven. Nārada (Vajirāraṇa) and now Bhikkhu Bodhi. It has reached its apogee and is unlikely to be improved further. We can feel we now have as definitive a version as we shall get. Students must construct their own manuals from it, filling out as they choose in order to keep comprehension to the end. The next requirement of students is to receive English translations of the many Commentaries on ABS. Since Bodhi has used two of them for paraphrasing the *Guide* in his edition, he should know that full translations of these Commentaries by such a lucid writer as he would be eagerly sought by English-reading Abhidhammikas. This toil would be well placed in advancing studies of this central authoritative work striving to elucidate the very core of the Buddha's teaching.

Reviewer's suggested materials for a study of ABS

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS:

A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma, Bhikkhu Bodhi, Kandy 1993. Now the primary work.

Compendium of Philosophy, S.Z. Aung & C.A.F. Rhys Davids, PTS, London 1910 & repr. There are useful notes on various technical terms and a long introductory essay.

Manual of Abhidhamma, Nārada (Vajirāraṇa) [not to be confused with the late U Nārada (Burma) of Paṭṭhāna fame], BPS, Kandy 1968. Gives useful explanations of individual words not always reproduced by Bodhi.

Translation and Guide to Chapter I ABS, R. Iggleston for British Buddhist Association, London 1975.

The Abhidhammatthasangaha and the Abhidhammatthavibhāvī-

Tīkā, H. Saddhātissa, PTS, Oxford 1989. Pāli only for those proficient enough to benefit without the aid of a translation.

SUPPLEMENTARY (AND VITAL) WORKS:

Dharmasena, C.B., *Aids to the Abhidhamma Philosophy*, Wheel 63/64, BPS, Kandy 1963. The charts, which follow the *cittas* in Dhammasaṅgani order rather than the re-ordered ABS classification, we have found to be vital for placing the states in memory.

Jayasuriya, W.F., *The Psychology and Philosophy of Buddhism*, YMBA Press, Colombo 1963. Reprinted for and stocks available at the British Buddhist Association, London. Our students read this along with their first reading of ABS as it comments on each chapter from a Western secular-educated approach.

Karunadasa, Y., *Buddhist Analysis of Matter*, Colombo 1967. Essential for making sense of the Buddhist concept of *rūpa*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ānguttaranikāyatikā. Volume I. Primoz Pecenko. Pali Text Society, Oxford 1996. xc, 222 pp. £16.50. ISBN 0 86013 346 X.

As is well known, the Pali Text Society was founded in 1881 by T.W. Rhys Davids 'for the purpose of editing in Pali, and if possible of translating into English, such Pali books as still exist in manuscripts preserved in Europe or Asia, in order to render accessible to students the rich stores of the earliest Buddhist literature which are lying unedited and practically unused'. Over one hundred years after the foundation of the Society, that task remains uncompleted.

Reasonably enough, at the beginning emphasis was placed on publishing the canonical texts. The last to appear was Volume II of the *Apadāna* in 1927. The importance of the commentarial *aṭṭhakathās* was realised, and they too were published as and when editors could be found. Translations into English were made, but a handful of canonical texts still await translators, while only a minority of *aṭṭhakathās* are available in English. The publication of the *tīkas*, the sub-commentaries, has made much slower progress. The first, that upon the *Dīgha-nikāya-aṭṭhakathā*, was published in three volumes in 1970.

It is therefore a matter of great pleasure to welcome the publication of the first volume of the *tīkā* upon the *Ānguttaranikāya-aṭṭhakathā* (*Manorathapūraṇī*), which is essentially the same as the thesis which Dr Pecenko submitted to the Australian National University for the Ph.D. degree. It contains a list of abbreviations (pp.xi-xxiii) and a very lengthy introduction (pp.xxv-lxx) describing the sources used (all of which belong to the Burmese tradition), the orthography of the manuscripts, the relationship of the sources and the method of editing and presenting the text, and discussing the authorship and date of the work. There is a long bibliography (pp.lxxi-xc). The text (pp.1-103) consists of the *Ganthārambhakathā* and the *vanṇanā* upon that, and the *Rūpādivaṇṇanā* including the *Nettinayavaṇṇanā*. The notes (pp.105-211) discuss variant readings and exegetical matters. The volume ends with a table of parallel passages.

The portion of the volume devoted to the text of the *tīkā* is

short and comments upon merely the first 29 pages of the first volume of the *Manorathapūraṇī*, but it is to be hoped that Volume II, which is about to go to the printers, will contain more text, since there will be no need to repeat the list of abbreviations, introduction and bibliography.

When the work is completed, it will be a worthy addition to the Pali Text Society's *List of Issues*.

K.R. Norman

Style and Function: A Study of the dominant stylistic features of the prose portions of Pāli canonical sutta texts and their mnemonic function. Mark Allon. The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo 1997. xiv, 394 pp. ISBN 4-906267-40-8.

Scholars agree that in the early stages of the history of Buddhism all texts were transmitted orally. This view is supported not only by the facts that there is little or no evidence for the use of writing in India before the date of Aśoka and that the Buddhist tradition itself states that texts were transmitted orally before their writing down, traditionally in the first century BCE, but also by signs in the texts themselves, noted early on in the modern study of Pāli literature, which strongly support the oral tradition theory. More than a century ago Rhys Davids drew attention to some of the features which, he suggested, aided the power of memory for Buddhist Sutta and Vinaya texts. He pointed out 'Firstly, the use of stock phrases, of which the commencement once given, the remainder followed as a matter of course'.

Much has been written in recent years about oral recitation, especially of epic poetry, and it is important to see how far the findings of such investigations coincide with what can be deduced about the recitation of Pāli texts. One difference becomes clear immediately. Oral epic, both ancient and modern, makes great use of formulae, set words or phrases which the reciter may include or omit, as circumstances dictate. The situation with regard to Pāli literature is different. There too there are formulae, particularly at the beginning and end of discourses, but they are always there, and a reciter does not have the freedom to omit them even if he wants to.

It seems very likely that in the very earliest period of

Buddhism bhikkhus recited the Buddha's teachings as they remembered them. This might well have led to disagreements about where the sermon was preached, and when, and to whom. Whether such differences can be described as improvisation, in the sense in which it is used by those who study modern epic recitation, is a question for discussion. If there were such differences, then their absence in the texts as we now have them implies that they have been removed and replaced by a certain amount of standardisation, presumably by the early reciters (*bhāṇakas*).

Although scholars have studied individual formulae in Pāli texts, no comprehensive examination of formulae as a whole has been made. In the first part of the book under review, which is a revised version of his Cambridge Ph.D. dissertation (in the Acknowledgements and elsewhere he refers to it as his Cambridge D.Phil. thesis, but it is a wise man who knows the terminology of his own University), entitled 'The use of formulas or standardised phrases in Pāli sutta texts: approach formulas in the Dīghanikāya', Allon gives a detailed analysis of such formulae in the Dīghanikāya. He analyses and categorises them, according to who was approaching whom, and shows that, as Rhys Davids stated, once the circumstances had been fixed and the identities of the participants were known, the form of words followed almost inevitably. This was clearly a great help to memorisation. Allon draws attention to the very small number of departures from the set patterns, which suggests that standardisation was not imposed blindly upon the material. He concludes that 'meaning was still the ultimate determinant of diction'.

Rhys Davids went on to draw attention to 'secondly, the habit of repeating whole sentences or even paragraphs, which in our modern books would be understood or inferred, instead of being expressed'. It is probable that he had in mind such passages as we find in the Alagaddūpamasutta of the Majjhima-nikāya, where we read that a bhikkhu called Ariṭṭha developed the erroneous view: 'In so far as I understand the *dhamma* taught by the Bhagavat, it is that, in following those things called stumbling-blocks by the Bhagavat, there is no stumbling-block at all'. Other monks heard that Ariṭṭha had developed this erroneous

view, and went to ask him if what they had heard was true. When he confirmed that it was, they informed the Buddha, who sent for Ariṭṭha and questioned him himself. When Ariṭṭha persisted in his wrong view, the Buddha condemned it. The interesting, if tedious, feature of this passage is that at every stage of the enquiry the heretical doctrine 'In so far as I understand the *dhamma* taught by the Bhagavat, it is that, in following those things called stumbling-blocks by the Bhagavat, there is no stumbling-block at all' is repeated verbatim — twelve times in all. This repetition undoubtedly helped with the memorisation of the sutta.

It would appear that repetition was at one time more widespread than appears in the texts in their present form, but once oral recitation gave way to writing and scribes found it tedious to write out again and again sentences which could easily be found by referring back to where they first appeared in the sutta they were replaced by *pe* or *la* (both short for *peyyāla* < Sanskrit *paryāya*, 'recurrence, repetition'). In short, the repetition which aided the transmission of the oral tradition proved to be a handicap once the oral tradition had been replaced by a written one. A similar usage can be seen in Jain texts — e.g. the use of the word *jāva* '(and so on) down to', and the employment of numerals to indicate the number of words omitted — and we may see the influence of writing there too.

In the second part of the book, entitled 'The proliferation of similar word elements and units of meaning to form sequences or "strings" in the prose portions of Pāli sutta texts, the tendency to arrange the units within such sequences according to the number of syllables of each — the Waxing Syllable Principle (WSP) — and the sound and metrical similarities integral to these structures', Allon examines the extent to which repetition occurs. To do this he reconstitutes the complete text of the Udumbarikā-sīhanāda-sutta of the Dīghanikāya. Such a task is rather more difficult than might be expected because the various manuscript traditions are not uniform in the use which they make of the *pe* and *la* abbreviation markers. Allon analyses and categorises the varieties of repetition, and in a detailed examination of the sutta shows that repetition occurs to a far greater extent than has

been assumed. He points out that there is frequently repetition of a particular consonant (i.e. alliteration) or of a sequence of syllables (i.e. rhyme). It is clear that such features would enable a reciter to remember a text more easily, and therefore to recite it more accurately.

There seems, however, to be a clear distinction between these features and the formulae which are discussed in the first part of the book. We can see that almost certainly the standardisation of approach formulae was deliberately imposed, presumably to get rid of a wide range of different forms of wording, which would have made memorisation more difficult. It is, however, hard to believe that these occurrences of alliteration and rhyming could have been imposed on the text, which would have involved the *bhāṇakas* in a vast reworking of the sutta in order to introduce them. It would follow then that they were, for the most part at least, in the sutta from its origin and we must assume that they were there in the words of the original author (if that is the appropriate word to use) of the sutta. It would seem unlikely that the author would have chosen the vocabulary and stylistic features with an eye to their easier memorisation and subsequent recitation. It would seem more likely that the features were part of his speech pattern, rather than being intended as an aid to memory.

Allon also investigates occurrences of the so-called Waxing Syllable Principle in the Uduubarika-sīhanāda-sutta, in both compounds and phrases, and he gives an analysis of the stock description of arahats found in Jain texts to show how far the WSP was operational there too. Scholars writing about this principle have pointed to a rule in Pāṇini's grammar stating that in *dvandva* compounds of two words with an unequal number of syllables, the word with the fewer syllables comes first. The *vartikā* on the rule comments: 'when there are many words, there is no fixed rule', which shows that the rule was of limited application in Sanskrit, and certainly did not apply to the order of words in a sentence. It has been pointed out by various scholars that, at one time or another, this rule has applied to some extent in Basque, Magyar, Turkish, Javanese, Assyria-Babylonian, Latin, Greek and German.

It would seem that the WSP is a phenomenon which is not the exclusive feature of an oral composition as opposed to a written one, but is rather a product of the human mind. Caland regarded this as a 'rhythmic law' and declared that it is 'latent in every man'. The WSP has been used by some scholars as an aid for the relative dating of Pāli texts, in the belief that a non-WSP version of a phrase must be later than a WSP version, but this view seems untenable. If the WSP was in origin part of the mental attributes of all people, i.e. an underlying principle of human utterance, then we can see that at a time when writing had not been invented, it was inevitably an attribute of oral communication. Once writing had been invented, then the WSP appeared in written communications as a product of the workings of the authors' minds. It would seem likely, therefore, that strings of words which follow the WSP were not necessarily inserted to serve a mnemonic function. The WSP was rather a factor which, since it tended to fix the order of words in an utterance, happened to make memorisation easier.

Allon has also examined comparable formulae in other Pāli suttas texts and has found some differences between them. This is interesting and important, because it probably sheds light on the way in which the *bhāṇaka* tradition was organised into separate components, so that a sutta in the keeping of two sets of *bhāṇakas* might well have variations if the two sets were independent and did not consult one another in order to produce one single version acceptable to both. It is highly desirable that further comparative studies of these matters should be carried out. Now that the whole of the Theravāda canon is available on CD-ROM and searches can be made electronically, while several Jain texts are also available, and the task of putting Buddhist Sanskrit texts onto CD-ROM has begun, we may hope that this work will be carried out before too long. Since Allon has established the methodology for analysing the material, rapid progress in such comparative studies should be possible.

K.R. Norman

Bhesajjamañjusā Chapters 1-18. Jinadasa Liyanaratne. Pali Text Society, Oxford 1996. vi, 393 pp. £17.00. ISBN 0 86013 347 8.

The Bhesajjamañjusā (Bhes), which was written in Sri Lanka in 1261, is the only known medical work written in Pāli. It has attracted the attention of such Western scholars as Burnouf and Filliozat, but although a number of editions of the complete text or portions of it have been published in Sinhala script, and an abstract of it has appeared in Burmese script, there is no published edition in Roman script. An edition of the first eighteen of the forty chapters of the text, which deal with the fundamentals of traditional medicine, was submitted for the Ph.D. degree of the University of London by D.C.P. Beneragama in 1953 but remains unpublished, and Dr Liyanaratne has now produced a new edition of the same chapters.

In the Introduction (pp.1-37) he discusses the author and date of the Bhes and its *sanne*, and he gives information about the printed editions which exist and the editorial principles he has followed in making this new edition. He gives an assessment of the importance of the Bhes and its *sanne* as medical texts, of their place in Pāli language and literature and of the importance of the Bhes for the history of Buddhism and Āyurveda.

The edition (pp.40-203) is based upon six manuscripts, which were selected on a regional basis and are described in the Introduction. Bhes is very dependent upon earlier authors. It cites nearly seventy medical authorities and contains a large number of verses based in whole or in part on Sanskrit medical texts. Liyanaratne has very assiduously traced them and has listed them in an Appendix of Sanskrit Parallels (pp.210-315). They have sometimes helped in determining the correct reading in the Pāli text and in clarifying the meaning.

Other appendices contain the colophon to the *sanne* (pp. 204-5), which contains important historical information, and a List of Metres used in the text (pp.206-9). There is also a General Index (pp.316-33) and Indexes (pp.334-60) of Diseases, Materia Medica, Flora and Fauna. There is also a Line Index to Stanzas (pp.370-93).

The remaining twenty-two chapters of Bhes deal with aetiology and therapy. It is very much to be hoped that Dr

Liyanaratne will edit and complete the task which he has so successfully started.

K.R. Norman

The Śālistamba Sūtra and its Indian Commentaries. Jeffrey D. Schoening. Volume I. Translation with Annotation. Volume II. Tibetan Editions. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 35, 1-2. Vienna 1995. pp.xx, 388; ix, 382. ATS 850.

I. There is an old canonical sūtra, a *logion* (if we may adopt that term from NT studies), that appears very archaic: He who sees *pratītyasamutpāda* also sees (the) Dharma, and he who sees (the) Dharma also sees (the) Buddha.

The purpose of the celebrated Śālistambasūtra (SSS) is to explain the meaning (*artha*) of this old sūtra. The importance of the SSS was at an early date recognised by ancient as well as modern Buddhist scholars. Thus, the SSS is available in classical Tibetan, Mongolian, and (four) Chinese translations and, whereas the complete Sanskrit text is no longer available, it has been easy for scholars of this century to reconstruct one that comes convincingly close to an assumed 'original', thanks in particular to the fact that approximately 90% of the Sanskrit is quoted extensively by various later Indian Mahāyāna scholars. For Nāgārjuna and his Mādhyamika followers the SSS served as an *āgama* of considerable authority. Also, the SSS commanded the attention of several Mahāyāna commentators in India (and Tibet). Two of the commentaries that have survived are ascribed to Nāgārjuna himself.

For the modern reconstruction (in the positive sense of the word) we are, first of all, indebted to the indefatigable Louis de La Vallée Poussin's text, *Théorie des douze causes* (London 1913). This was followed by N. Aiyaswami Sastri's edition, including the Tibetan versions, etc. (Adyar 1950). (Unfortunately, LVP's *Théorie* was not accessible to the Indian pandit.) The most recent edition, giving also the Tibetan version, as well as an English translation (also of the Chinese), notes and parallel passages, etc., we owe to the good efforts of N. Ross Reat, *The Śālistamba Sūtra* (Delhi 1993). It is to Dr Reat's convenient work that I shall hereafter refer.

Should the ŠSS really be classified as belonging to Mahāyāna? The answer obviously depends on how we define Mahāyāna, and on how we read the text of the ŠSS itself, focusing on its terminology. Erich Frauwallner, for instance, in his *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus* (Berlin 1969, repr. 1994), gave a long extract of 'Das Sūtra von der jungen Reisplanze' (pp.49-60) as representing 'Die Lehre des Buddha'. Like LVP he was, naturally, aware that the ŠSS was said to have been delivered by the Bodhisattva Maitreya, and that it was transmitted as belonging to Mahāyāna.

Dr Reat, on the other hand, finds (p.3) that 'From paragraph seven on, it is clear that the *Śālistamba* expresses a fundamental Mahāyāna position, but it does so in remarkably conservative, even quaint terms'. Reat (p.4) sees it as a 'fundamental Mahāyāna position — that enlightenment represents a realization of *Dharma-kāya* Buddha'. In support of his view, he calls attention to the expression *anuttaradharmaśarīra* in §7, and notes that this is an odd Sanskrit term, where *Dharma-kāya* would be expected.

The argument would perhaps be valid if there were no references to a *dharma-kāya* of the Buddha in the canonical writings of Theravāda. But is that actually the case? In the old Brahmajāla Sutta there is a passage that strikes me as noteworthy in this connection. It says, in the translation by T.W. Rhys Davids: 'The outward form, brethren, of him who has won the truth, stands before you, but that which binds it to rebirth is cut in twain. So long as his body shall last, so long do gods and men behold him. On the dissolution of the body, beyond the end of his life, neither gods nor men shall see him' (for the Pāli, see PTS ed. of D I, 46). Here, then, the Buddha refers to a *tathāgata-kāya* that can be seen by men and gods. Implicit is the idea that after the dissolution of the visible physical body of the Tathāgata, he is somehow in (pari)nirvāṇa. True, this second body is not explicitly mentioned here, but if we keep in mind the numerous canonical passages that identify Tathāgata with Brahman, Dharma, Nirvāṇa, etc., I do not think that we would be doing any violence to this passage by understanding the notion of a second body — a *dharma-kāya* — to be implicit in the words of the Tathāgata. Certainly, the Tathāgata would not want to say to his monks that once his physical body is dissolved, that is the end of the story. It

somehow passes into Nirvāṇa. Of course, we should not take the term *kāya* too literally. Like the Latin *corpus* it readily lends itself to figurative use.

On the other hand it is obviously true that it always takes time for ideas to develop. The notion of two bodies may not have been so clear from the very start. Here, however, I must remind the reader of the fact that the Tathāgata is invariably presented as a Bhagavat, even in the earliest sources, and this means that he, by definition, has two bodies, a mortal and an immortal. It is, in other words, 'understood' from the very beginning that the Tathāgata has a physical as well as a spiritual 'body'. From the very beginning, the Bhagavat was in a sense identical with the 'body of rules' he as a teacher would explain to his listeners.

So, in brief, I find that the celebrated *gāthās* of the Vajracchedikā (ed. E. Conze, pp.56-7), *ye mām rūpena*, etc., reflect a doctrine of *kāyadvaya* already consciously implicit in Theravāda. Here the terms *dharmaṭā* and *dharma-kāya* are virtually synonyms.

This is not to say, however, that the ŠSS is a very early text. Above all, I would point to the presence of the term *tattva* in the text. As I have remarked elsewhere, the term is not canonical. In §9 of the Sanskrit text of ŠSS it is inserted in brackets without, however, being supported by the Tibetan *ma nor ba nyid*. (The original is difficult to decide, and the *tattvatā* suggested, in a parallel text, by the late Chandrabal Tripāṭhi in his *Fünfundzwanzig Sūtras des Nidānasamyukta*, Berlin 1962, p.149, is definitely wrong, cf. p.40.) The word *tattva* also comes up in a sentence that offers an alternative (*atha vā*) definition of *avidyā*, ŠSS §29: *atha vā tattve 'pratipattir mithyāpratipattir ajñānam avidyā*. There is, as said, no early Buddhist canonical authority for the usage of *tattva* — a term that can be traced back to the celebrated 'great saying' *tat tvam asi* in the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad. Later on, based on this, the substantive *tattvam* was formed, meaning 'identity', and eventually Buddhist ācāryas with a traditional Brahmanical education introduced it into their own writings. (If I am not mistaken it thus only occurs in later Mahāyāna texts.) Summing up, then, the text of the ŠSS shows

some signs of later usage, but nothing seems to prevent us from reading its *artha* as representing a very early form of Buddhism.

Here are some of the main points of the ŠSS, as well as some remarks of my own.

The term Dharma covers not only the Āryan *mārga*, but also its result (*phala*), viz. *nirvāna* (§5), which means that a Buddha, through *sarvadharmaśabodha*, 'incorporates Dharma', he is *dharmaśarīra* (§6). It is by seeing *pratīyasamutpāda* as uncreated, unborn, etc., that one, *eo ipso*, also sees the Dharma and the Buddha as incorporating the *anuttaradharma* (§7). The term *pratīyasamutpāda* means that arising has certain causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*pratyaya*); it is a synonym of *dharmatā*, etc., the way things are (§§8-9). There is an external and an internal *pratīyasamutpāda*, and both arise through two *kāranas*, viz. *hetūpanibandha* and *pratyayopanibandha* (§10). The sprout that comes from a seed, etc., is an example of a causal nexus of external ('physical') *pratīyasamutpāda* (§11). Here the coming together (*samavāya*) of the six elements (*dhātu*), viz. earth, water, heat, wind, space and time, serve as the conditional nexus (§12). Each of them has its own function (*kṛtya*) (§13). Thus the seed is not created by itself, or by anything else such as God, Time or Prakṛti, or without a cause (§14). This theory of causality thus avoids the heresy of *śāśvata* and *uccheda*, etc. (§§15-20). The internal ('personal, individual') *pratīyasamutpāda* also depends on these two *kāranas*, viz. *hetu*- and *pratyaya-upanibandha* (§21). The first *hetūpanibandha* is *avidyā* (§22), and again the *samavāya* of the six *dhātus* — now with *vijñāna* replacing time (*rtu* = *kāla*) — form the *pratyayopanibandha* (§23). Further observations on the *dhātus* (§§25-26), and on *avidyā* (§§27-29). Furthermore, *avidyā* along with desire, karma and *vijñāna* serve as *hetu* of *pratīyasamutpāda*; *vijñāna* is like a *bīja* in the field of karma, desire provides the moisture and ignorance scatters the seeds (§31-34). Consciousness (*vijñāna*) also depends on certain *kāranas*, such as the objects and the sense organs, light, etc. (§35). Thus there is no soul or the like that transmigrates, but the law of causality, as described, remains a fact (§§36-48).

From this brief survey it is obvious that the ŠSS has to do with the proper understanding of causality. To understand Bud-

dhism is to understand the principles of true and natural causes, or causality. If we, with Aristotle, define scientific knowledge as a knowledge of true and natural causes — in time and space — then, clearly, the ŠSS commands the attention not merely of historians but also of philosophers, i.e. true scientists, the *scientiae professeores*, as Tacitus phrases it.

First of all, our text makes the necessary distinction between causes and conditions. Furthermore, it makes a distinction between *causa efficiens* and *causa materialis*. Both are instrumental (*kāraṇa*) in bringing about *samutpāda*. Is its ontology materialistic or idealistic? On the one hand all conditions can be reduced to the six *dhātus*, on the other the *prima causa* seems to be spiritual: *avidyā* or *vijñāna*. Materialism? Idealism? Or both? Or neither?

2. Jeffrey Schoening's new edition contains all the basic textual materials for a critical assessment of the ŠSS, its form, contents and position in the history of ancient Indian Buddhist literature. It contains the text of the Tibetan version of the ŠSS (pp.389-448), along with the two commentaries ascribed to Nāgārjuna (pp.533-699), and the *tīkā* of Kamalaśīla (pp.449-532), as well as the Sanskrit quotations (pp.701-35). In addition to a long and useful introduction about Indian sūtra commentaries, their translations, etc., the first volume of Schoening's work contains a complete translation of the ŠSS along with Kamalaśīla's commentary (pp.191-338). There is also a translation of the versification of the ŠSS, and annotations based on the prose commentary on the ŠSS and the versification (*kārikā*), both of which are ascribed to Nāgārjuna (pp.339-65). A summary of Nāgārjuna's commentaries is given pp.50-80.

One of the noteworthy features of Kamalaśīla's commentary is that it follows the five-fold commentarial method prescribed by Vasubandhu's *Vyākhyāyukti* (a critical edition of which, incidentally, is a great desideratum). Schoening's careful study of the commentaries enables him to observe that at least eleven commentaries were influenced by the five-fold method (p.39). Strangely enough, Vasubandhu, in the commentaries ascribed to him, does not himself follow this method! Schoening, therefore, asks whether Vasubandhu was, in fact, the author of the

Vyākhyāyukti.

It must not be overlooked that Vasubandhu in his *Karmasiddhiprakarana* explicitly mentioned the Vyākhyāyukti, see my notes in *Asiatische Studien* 46/1 (1992), p.274. So, instead of raising doubts about the authenticity of the Vyākhyāyukti, we might as well, perhaps with better reason, raise doubts about the commentaries ascribed to Vasubandhu.

According to Kamalaśīla, in Schoening's translation (p.198): 'The purpose is to remove obscuration (*sgrib pa; āvaraṇa*) and to enter the path of *nirvāṇa* that is not clung to/dwelled in (*myi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa; apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*); the path of *nirvāṇa* that is not clung to/dwelled in is, in brief, the *bodhisattva*'s discriminating insight and compassion'. — I find this not untypical of Schoening's sometimes rather mechanical way of translating; what Kamalaśīla says is this: 'The purpose (of the ŠSS) is to remove (the two kinds of) obscuration, and to introduce (a bodhisattva) to the path (that leads) to *Nirvāṇa* that has no foundation; the path (that leads) to *Nirvāṇa* without foundation is, in brief, the discriminating insight and compassion of a bodhisattva'. The meaning of *apratiṣṭhita-* is that *Nirvāṇa*, as opposed to the other *dhātus*, has no *pratiṣṭhā*, cf. O. Qvarnström, *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective* (Lund 1989), p.120. — As a rule Schoening's translations are fully reliable, as is his edition of the Tibetan texts. Some readers, however, will regret the way he has chosen to present the critical text. The *apparatus criticus* is burdened by slavishly reporting too many miscarvings in the Tibetan prints, and the text itself almost all too faithfully reports wrong readings so that the reader has to consult the apparatus for the correct ones. Should an editor not consider being a little more friendly to his reader? In my opinion an editor should present a clear and simple picture of the text itself, assigning all the problems and discussions to the notes.

However, let us now turn to the two commentaries ascribed to Nāgārjuna. As Schoening observes (p.27), there are seven versifications such as the Śālistamba[ka]-kārikā (ŠSK), and they were intended to be memorised and used as study manuals. If the ŠSK, in seventy verses, is authentic, it would be the earliest of such versifications, and perhaps thus served as model for later

attempts. In my *Nagarjuniana* (p.13), I classified ŠSK as 'perhaps authentic', but I had doubts about the authenticity of the prose commentary (ŠST), *ibid.*, n.21. My main reason was that 'this must be a rather late work inasmuch as it deals with the four *anubandhas*, not attested in early *Madhyamaka*'.

Now that I have carefully read Schoening's book I still maintain my original position about the ŠSK. I would not be surprised if it were written by Nāgārjuna but I cannot prove this to be so. With regard to the authenticity of the ŠST, I am now less sceptical than I was in 1982. I am not, however, aware of any argument that proves the ŠST to be by the same author as the ŠSK.

Schoening (p.37) mentions my doubts concerning the four *anubandhas*, and says that 'certain non-Buddhists use the four *anubandhas* in order to introduce a text and its purpose'.

Now it is not just 'certain non-Buddhists' who do so. The four *anubandhas*, corresponding to those of the ŠST (p.563), are also mentioned by Dharmottara in his *Nyāyabindutikā* (pp.1-2): *sambandha*, *prayojana*, *abhidhāna* and *abhidheya*. (The term *anubandha* itself, however, is not mentioned.) Moreover, Dharmottara, *ibid.*, uses the example of examining the *kākadanta* to illustrate the futility of a task, as does the ŠST (p.566). (There are several other phrases in ŠST that remind one of Dharmottara.) Obviously, the ŠST presupposes that a commentator at the beginning of a scientific work must account for the *sambandha*, etc. — otherwise he is like a madman, hardly aware of what he is up to. One gets the impression that the ŠST knows these four terms from other scientific treatises such as those on medicine (*cikitsādiśāstra*). More research is required here. In other words, before we know when and where these four terms were first formulated their value for determining the date of our text remains uncertain (cf. Schoening, *op. rec.*, p.37, n.2, with which I agree).

Assuming that the rules for composing a *sāstra* were borrowed from some non-Buddhist source, this would be in perfect accordance with one of Nāgārjuna's usual practices, namely that of adopting Brahmanical terms and ideas for strictly Buddhist purposes. This reflects the enlightened Mādhyamika ideal of the bodhisattva as a polymath, cf. *Nagarjuniana*, p.237.

The style of the ŠST is comparable to that of the *Vigraha-*

vyāvartanī. It is straightforward, explicit, slightly repetitious and on the whole rather archaic. Occasionally, verses are added. It could be understood by Sanskrit readers with little or no previous knowledge of Buddhism. It thus addresses much the same readership as do some of Nāgārjuna's other popular works, Ratnāvalī, Suṛllekha, Bodhisambhāra[kal], etc. It offers many basic definitions of Buddhist technical terms such as *avidyā*, etc. (cf. Schoening, p.50), and can therefore also be seen as a sort of supplement to some of Nāgārjuna's most abstract works (ŚŚ, Mūlamadhyamakārikā (MMK), Yuktisāṭikā, etc.) where the student's familiarity with these ideas is presupposed by the author. Large portions of the Ratnāvalī and the two other versifications just mentioned are comparable to the ŚSK in the sense that they offer a summary, often quite literal, of (parts of) a sūtra for mnemonic purposes. (There are thus *more* than just seven versifications!) In other respects the ŚSK is also comparable to two other works ascribed to Nāgārjuna, viz. Prajñāśataka (cf. my review in *The Adyar Library Bulletin* 56 (1992), pp.203-7), and the Bhāvanākrama, an anthology of fifty-six verses extracted from the Laṅkāvatārasūtra (ed. in *Asiatische Studien* 46/1 (1992), pp.266-73).

The resemblance to the Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayakārikā is also considerable, cf. *Nagarjuniana*, p.170. It supplements the ŚST.

So far, then, I can detect nothing in the ŚSK or ŚST that argues against Nāgārjuna's authorship. — But perhaps there are still problems?

'The attribution of a Yogācāra treatise to Nāgārjuna is, however, curious', says Schoening (p.53). — It cannot be denied that the ŚST mentions *trisvabhāva* and *ālayavijñāna*. But is this *really* a problem? For Bhavya, a full-blooded Mādhyamika who explicitly ascribes the commentary to Nāgārjuna, there was quite clearly no problem. Can one accept *svabhāvatraya* and *ālayavijñāna*, and still remain faithful to Mādhyamaka? Is Yogācāra compatible with the Śūnyatāvāda of a Mādhyamika?

To some extent this is a quarrel about words. In the early period the term Yogācāra can be used for a Mādhyamika; it is even found in the title of Āryadeva's Catuhśataka. The real bone of contention is whether *svacitta* can exist self-consciously in and

by itself without any other object than itself as a grasping or as a projecting entity. The debate is as old as the Laṅkāvatārasūtra, or even older. This text is accepted as canonical by all Mādhyamika authors even though it teaches doctrines about *ālayavijñāna*, *svabhāvatraya*, etc. (see my paper 'The Lankāvatārasūtra in Early Indian Madhyamaka Literature', in *Asiatische Studien* 46/1 (1992), pp.244-79, and 'cittamāttra in Indian Mahāyāna until Kamalaśīla', in *WZKS* 41 (1997), pp.159-206).

In the ŚST *ālayavijñāna* is understood as a store for the seeds (*bija*) of *vijñāna* as taught by the ŚSS. This is almost a commonsense notion. Moreover, the doctrine of *svabhāvatraya* is interpreted in a way that brings it into harmony with a Mādhyamaka position. In the Bodhicittavivaraṇa, and in Acintyastava 44-45, Nāgārjuna deals with these concepts exactly as the Laṅkāvatārasūtra sometimes does, and as the ŚST also does. Once we keep these facts in mind there is nothing curious in the attribution of the ŚST to Nāgārjuna. It is only our preconceived notions about 'Yogācāra' that create problems on a level that the reader will excuse me for describing as *parikalpitavabhāva!*

What also deserves to be mentioned is that the ŚST uses the term *abhūtапarikalpa*. This term is often associated with the Mādhyāntavibhāga, but it can be traced further back to the Vimalakirtinirdeśasūtra (quoted in the Śikṣāsamuccaya, p.264: *abhūtапarikalpasya kim mūlam?* — *āha: viparyastā samjnā mūlam.* . .), and the Bodhisattvapiṭaka (Peking ed. 294b) — both of which are considered authoritative canonical texts for all Mādhyamikas, beginning with Nāgārjuna (Sūtrasamuccaya, Bodhisambhāra[kal], etc.).

There is at least one feature (not noticed by Schoening) that speaks in favour of the traditional attribution of ŚSK and ŚST to Nāgārjuna. On p.346, Schoening translates *chud zad med* as 'not barren'. The technical Sanskrit term behind this is probably *avipranāśa*, known from MMK 17.14 as one of Nāgārjuna's characteristic notions about karma that 'is never entirely lost'. The term does *not* occur in the ŚSS itself. In the ŚST as in the MMK *avipranāśa* is introduced by the commentator (Nāgārjuna) as a hypothesis (*kalpanā*) that 'saves' the karma doctrine from the frightful universality of emptiness.

To sum up: we still cannot prove that ŠSK and ŠST were actually written by Nāgārjuna or even by the same hand. On the other hand we cannot advance a single sound argument against their authorship. There is nothing to prevent us from using Jeffrey Schoening's edition as a document of early Indian Madhyamaka. As an editor he has done us a great service. 'Therefore, for anyone interested in learning more about the Mahāyāna interpretation of dependent arising, the Śālistamba Sūtra is an invaluable source' (p.l). This is the *prayojana* of his scrupulous editorial work.

Chr. Lindtner

Der Erkenntnislehre des Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka, nach dem Tshig gsal ston thun gyi tshad ma'i rnam bśad des 'Jam dbyans bźad pa'i rdo rje. Einleitung, Textanalyse, Übersetzung. Chizuko Yoshimizu. Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 37, Vienna 1996. xxiii, 309 pp.

If it is true, as the Madhyamaka school of Mahāyāna claims, that all things (*dharma, bhāva*) are empty, that they are nothing in themselves, that they are 'unoriginated' (*anutpanna*) — much like illusions — how, then, can we know this to be so, how can we be sure that our means of cognition (*pramāṇa*) are reliable? Surely, our means of cognition must also be empty and unoriginated, like illusions? Otherwise, clearly, not *everything* but only *some* things are empty? That would be inconsistent! Does a Mādhyamika reject the validity of *pramāṇas* altogether, or does he in some sense accept them — and, if so, how does he define the nature, the number and the objects (*prameya*) of such *pramāṇas*? Can he still retain his initial position (that *everything* is altogether empty), and still insist that the *pramāṇas* are somehow valid? That some things are less empty than others?

These are questions that Nāgārjuna and his followers already had to face, not only in ancient India but also more recently, in Tibet. And we, too, may want to be aware of the problem.

One of the Tibetan scholars who took up this challenge was the celebrated 'Jam dbyans bźad pa'i rdo rje (1648-1721, or 1722). He did so in the text here translated into German (with an analysis, various appendices, etc.) by Chizuko Yoshimizu: *Tshig gsal*

stion thun gyi tshad ma'i rnam bśad, being an exposition of some brief passages in the first chapter of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā*, the 'lucid' commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. 'Jam dbyans bźad pa'i rdo rje displays all the typical features of Tibetan scholasticism: the style is concise and systematic, even schematic, it shows an extensive knowledge of the authoritative India sources (and often quotes them), a fine and firm grasp of all that is philosophically relevant — and (understandably) almost no sense of historical development and background of Buddhism in the Indian context.

Asked the standard question about the number, definition and objects of the *pramāṇas*, Candrakīrti (the number one authority on Madhyamaka for Tibetan scholasticism), after having criticised Dignāga, sums up his (and Nāgārjuna's) 'position' in these words: *tad evam pramāṇacatusṭayāl lokasyārthādhigamo vyavasthāpyate; tāni ca parasparāpekṣayā sidhyanti; satsu pramāṇesu prameyārthāḥ, satsu prameyeṣv artheṣu pramāṇāni, no tu khalu svābhāvikī pramāṇaprameyayoh siddhir iti tasmat laukikam evāstu yathādr̥ṣṭam — ity alam prasāgēna* (*Prasannapadā*, ed. LVP, p.75).

In other words, like Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti handles the *pramāṇas* in the perspective of two truths, *satyadvaya*: the four kinds of *pramāṇa* (viz. *pratyakṣa, anumāna, upamāna, āgama*) are valid without discussion (*avisamvādin*) on a 'worldly' level, but in themselves, in the perspective of *paramārtha-satya*, we cannot distinguish what we know from how we know (the objects and means of knowledge).

This shift from one level of *satya* to another level of *satya* was already indicated by Nāgārjuna, by the little but very pregnant adversative *athā vā*, in *Vigrahavyāvartanī* 28. Moving on the level of *saṃvyavahāra* (= *lokasaṃvṛti-satya*) we can maintain a thesis (a *pratijñā*, or *pakṣa* based on some *pramāṇa*) that we can abandon once we move to a 'higher' level. The problem of the status of the *pramāṇas*, then, is really a problem of the status of the two truths. Since a *pramāṇa* is undoubtedly a kind of *jñāna*, the problem in other words is actually that there are different kinds, or levels, of *jñāna*. Loosely, we can say that a Mādhyamika knows the distinction between practical and theor-

ethical reason. (This comes out more clearly in Bhavya's distinction between two kinds of *buddhi*, *mati*, *dhī*, *prajñā*, see Madhyamakahrdaya (MKH) III.) As long as it is 'empirical', *jñāna* has no object (a *prameya*), but in the ultimate sense *jñāna* no longer has any object (or subject, for that matter). It is, therefore, only by way of *prajñapti* that we can here, in the ultimate sense, speak of *jñāna* and *pramāṇa*.

Methodologically, it is good to see that 'Jam dbyāns bžad pa'i rdo rje is fully aware of the few relevant parallel passages in the other extant commentaries of Candrakīrti, those on the Catuhśatka and Yuktisāṭikā (YS). This permits him to draw a better but still far from complete picture of Candrakīrti's position. Somewhat problematic, in particular, is his attempt to make a synthesis of Candrakīrti, Dignāga and even Dharmakīrti. Dignāga, as known, admits a certain kind of perception, a *yogipratyakṣa* that has a certain *svalaksana* as its object, or content (*viṣaya*). Can this yogic intuition be identified with the *tattvadarśana* that all Mādhyamikas, following the authority of the scriptures, admit? Candrakīrti takes up this point in his commentary to YS 8, and it is of considerable importance to be aware of it, if we wish to understand a major reason for the schism between the various branches of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra.

The problem has to do with the nature of the Buddha's *bodhi*, and our understanding of that significant event. This, again, has to do with the rôle of *āgama* as a *pramāṇa*. Candrakīrti is explicit: *sākṣāt atiṇdriyārthavidām āptānām yad vacanām sa āgamah* (Pras., p.75). He is also quite clear when it comes to *pratyakṣa(jñāna)*, as a *pramāṇa*: it is only valid *loke* (Pras., p.74, l.1; YŚvṛtti, p.41, l.5). He rejects Dignāga's theory about *svalaksana* as illogical and far too speculative (*kim anayā sūksmes-kiṣikayā laukikavyavahāre 'vatārikayā!* Pras., p.68, l.7). Candrakīrti, in other words, is not prepared to reduce the Buddha's *bodhi* to the kind of *yogipratyakṣa* envisaged by Dignāga, though, to be sure, he too, *passim*, accepts a certain kind of *yogi-prajñācakṣus*, characteristic of an *ārya* as opposed to an *anārya*, or *bāla*. What we see depends on who we are.

That there is a distinction to be made between a yogi of Madhyamaka and a yogi of Yogācāra is far from clear, as we

merely rely on the exposition of 'Jam dbyāns bžad pa'i rdo rje here given. To understand some of this we must turn to the MKH of Bhavya, with which, naturally, Candrakīrti was familiar (he quotes from it), and with which he probably also supposes his learned reader to be familiar. After all, Candrakīrti, in spite of all his 'clarity', was writing for 'insiders'.

From the fifth chapter of this work (the Sanskrit text is edited in *The Adyar Library Bulletin* 59 (1995), pp.37-65), we see that there was an ongoing controversy between Madhyamaka and Yogācāra about the proper interpretation (*naya*) of *prajñā-pāramitā*. Madhyamaka would understand *prajñā* to be perfect in terms of *satyadvaya*, whereas Yogācāra (there were two main branches: *sākāra-* and *nirākāravāda*) would interpret *prajñā* in terms of *svabhāvatraya*. As the Madhyamaka sees it, this would mean that, according to Yogācāra, the *bodhi* of the Buddha thus has some kind of object as its contents, viz. the positive lack of *parikalpitavabhāva* in *paratantrasvabhāva*, which is tantamount to the reality of *pariniṣpannasvabhāva*. (For further details, see my paper 'The Yogācāra Philosophy of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti', in *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions* 2 (1989), pp.27-52.) In brief, since *yogipratyakṣa* has a *viṣaya* (namely *svalaksana*), it cannot be identified with the *bodhi* of the Buddha which, according to various scriptural passages, supported by *yukti*, does not have any object at all for its support.

Bhavya's critique of Dignāga and Yogācāra is accepted by Candrakīrti, although tacitly (there is hardly anything really new in his Madhyamakāvatāra compared to the MKH of Bhavya), and we can therefore easily imagine how upset he would have been, had he been able to prognosticate what the Tibetan savant 'Jam dbyāns bžad pa'i rdo rje would be up to more than a thousand years later. It is impossible to create a synthesis of the Madhyamaka and the Yogācāra (*sākāra*) views on *pramāṇa* without first solving the conflict between a *satyadvaya* or *svabhāvatraya* approach to the understanding of *prajñā-pāramitā*. The Tibetan scholar is silent on this issue and leaves us in the dark.

What should also be kept in mind is that, historically speaking, *pramāṇavāda* belongs to the realm of debate. One cannot uphold a thesis, give a reason, etc., without basing that

thesis, etc., on the evidence of one or more *pramāṇas*. The object of a *pramāṇa*, the *prameya* is, therefore, always limited in some way. It seems meaningless to speak of a *pramāṇa* without an object. One may, with the texts, speak of *tattvajñāna*, of *advaya-jñāna*, etc. — but it would be extremely awkward to speak of *tattvapramāṇa*, *dharma-pramāṇa* or *advaya-pramāṇa*. In other words, by definition, any discussion about *pramāṇa* presupposes a distinction between subject and object. It belongs and is confined to the empirical sciences.

We can, therefore, be sure that we are dealing with a fairly late text when we find e.g. Dharmakīrti introducing a distinction between a *pramāṇa* that is *sāṃvayavahārika*, as opposed to one the *rūpa* of which is *pāramārthika*. But even here we are still dealing with a *jñāna* that has a sort of object. (See my paper 'Marginalia to Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇaviniścaya*', in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 28 (1984), pp.149-75.)

Noteworthy (*op. rec.*, p.178, n.355) is also Nāgārjuna's reference in his *Ratnāvalī* 4.91, to the Buddha as *pramāṇa*. So, strictly speaking, it is the word of the Buddha that is authoritative (as in the definition of *āgama* given above). Likewise, in *Bhagavadgītā* 3.21 and 16.24 (known to Nāgārjuna and his students), the term *pramāṇa* covers the man as well as the *śāstra*. That *āgama* needed the support of *yukti* for clarification was, naturally, clear to Nāgārjuna; see e.g. *Ratnāvalī* 3.14. So, it goes without repeating, a Mādhyamika, or Śūnyatāvādin (*Vigrahavyāvartanī* 69; cf. *Kaśyapaparivarta* §123) accepts the practical validity of the four traditional *pramāṇas*.

In the Indian Buddhist texts, *sāksāt-* and *pratyakṣa* belong to different contexts. The former is used to indicate the highest realisation of the Buddha, whereas *pratyakṣa* is a fairly late term, absent in the earlier canonical texts. Since both terms may be rendered into Tibetan by *miion sum (du)*, it goes without saying that the Tibetans, unaware of the difference in the original, were prone to confusion on this important point, and that could be fatal.

A final note. — As Dr Yoshimizu points out (*op. rec.*, p.154, n.229), it would seem that 'Jam dbyaṇs bžad pa'i rdo rje, and earlier Tibetan scholars, have been using a different version of Candrakīrti's *YŚvṛtti* than the one found in the published editions.

This observation is independently corroborated by my remarks in *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions* 8 (1995), pp.96-8. Exactly the same applies for (some of) the quotations from Bhavya's *dBu ma sñiṇ po* given in 'Jam dbyaṇs bžad pa'i rdo rje's *Grub mtha' chen mo*.

It goes without saying that Dr Yoshimizu deserves our gratitude for preparing this book, as does Ernst Steinkellner for publishing it so well in his *Wiener Studien*.

Chr. Lindtner

Unterscheidung der Gegebenheiten von ihrem wahren Wesen (Dharmadharmaṭāvibhāga). Eine Lehrschrift der Yogācāra-Schule in tibetischer Überlieferung. Klaus-Dieter Mathes. (Indica et Tibetica 26), Indica et Tibetica Verlag, Swisstal-Odendorf 1996. viii, 256 pp. pb DM64. ISBN 3 923 776 26 8.

This work, whose title can be rendered into English as 'Discrimination of Phenomena from their True Nature', is preoccupied with a text, extant in Tibetan prose and verse, of only 300 lines. In spite of that it has been very influential in the Yogācāra tradition both in India and Tibet and it has become the basis for the Mahāmudrā practice, which is particularly important in the bKa-rgud-pa school of Tibetan Buddhism. Being even terser than sūtra type works and serving originally for mainly mnemotechnic purposes, in order to be understood it required a detailed commentary, which was provided by Vasubandhu. The Sanskrit originals of the text and Vasubandhu's commentary have not been preserved, except for a small fragment, but the Tibetan versions of both are written in a style which allows identification of Sanskrit terms and even preserves Sanskrit syntax. Several more commentaries were written by Tibetan authors. It would appear that the text is still used for spiritual guidance in the context of the living oral tradition in Tibetan Buddhism.

The authorship of the teachings of the Dharmadharmaṭāvibhāga is ascribed by Buddhist tradition to the future Buddha Maitreya, who dwells in Tuṣita heaven awaiting the time for his mission on earth and who conveyed them, together with other instructions, to Asaṅga who was able to communicate with him when absorbed in deep meditation and subsequently wrote them

down as five separate texts on Maitreya's teachings. Opinions are divided as to the actual authorship of these works. Some scholars (among them Frauwallner and Tucci) accepted the historicity of an author called Maitreyanātha, who must have been Asaṅga's teacher, but nothing is known about him from other sources. Others accept Asaṅga's authorship, but faced with of the different style of the five 'Maitreya works', a view was expressed, e.g. by Seyfort Ruegg, that they may have been written by Asaṅga after a meditational experience in which he felt inspired by Maitreya. Tucci also seems to have come round later to a similar view. This is a nice example of academic scholars' tolerance, ready to accommodate in some way a traditional Buddhist belief. But the author of this book is not impressed: he would like to go further and leave open the possibility of a yogi, such as Asaṅga, purified by twelve years of meditation, meeting and communicating with highly developed beings such as Maitreya, and quotes Conze in support.

There are many more interesting points dealt with in the author's Introduction, but none of them is controversial from the academic point of view, or heart-warming for a Buddhist follower, such as the one about Maitreya's intervention. The bulk of the book is taken up by originals of the basic text and commentaries, their descriptions, analyses and translations and by explanations of their linguistic, historical and philosophical contexts and significance. An excellent and extensive summary is given at the end, followed by a glossary of Tibetan terms and a bibliography. The appendix contains one of the Tibetan commentaries (by Mi pham) executed on the basis of printing blocks from Kathmandu and Rumtek.

This is a scholarly monograph of high standard, as one would expect from a work accepted for publication in this series. However, it is, in fact, also quite readable for non-specialists with a deeper interest in Tibetan Buddhism.

Karel Werner

Book Reviews

Ātmatattvaviveka by Udayanācārya, with Translation, Explanation and Analytical-Critical Survey. N.S. Dravid. Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla 1995. 587 pp. ISBN 81-85952-28-0.

The Ātmatattvaviveka is an important work by Udayana (ca. 11th century), one of the most revered figures of the Nyāya school. Udayana's thought is often said to mark a transition between the old Nyāya tradition and the so-called 'Navya Nyāya' beginning with Gangeśa. Most of the works attributed to Udayana that have come down to us are concerned with refuting various Buddhist positions, and the Ātmatattvaviveka is a good example of this.

The main thrust of the text is a rebuttal of the Buddhist denial of the doctrine of 'self' (*ātman*), although the discussion of this only occupies a small portion of the work. Before getting to his main topic, Udayana first attacks the Buddhist doctrine of momentariness. He then rebuts the doctrine, often attributed to the Yogācāra school, that consciousness is the sole reality and that its objects are not ontically different from it. Following this he upholds the Nyāya doctrine that a thing is greater than its composite parts by attacking the Buddhist notion that 'compounded things' (*samskṛta*) are merely aggregates of parts to which conventional nominal designations are applied. Another important concern of the text is a refutation of the doctrine of 'isolates' (*apoha*), according to which a thing is known by cognitively eliminating whatever is not that thing. This doctrine was upheld by the school of Buddhist logicians, beginning with Dignāga and Dharmakīrti.

The doctrine of momentariness, along with the notion that things are constantly changing collections of parts, is a major focus of Udayana's arguments. The Nyāya school contends that — contrary to the Buddhist view — things have stability and duration. This is essential to his main intention, the establishment of the Nyāya doctrine of an enduring self that is not dependent on the changing components of the individuals with which it is associated. After establishing to his satisfaction that the Buddhist doctrines are mistaken (which he takes as implicit confirmation of the validity of the Nyāya position), Udayana goes on to discuss various arguments for the existence of God, the authority of the Vedas, and the final goal of life.

Udayana begins his examination in the salutation verses, which are dedicated to God, envisaged as the creator and sustainer of worlds, as the compassionate teacher and preceptor who speaks words of truth intended to bring suffering beings to salvation. Udayana follows the opening section with a discussion of the nature of the self, beginning with a statement that beings suffer due to ignorance. He then goes on to say that final happiness can only be attained by those who directly cognise the self. Four Buddhist positions are outlined and refuted in detail, and most of the work is concerned with this topic. In his arguments, Udayana outlines the realistic Nyāya theory of causation, and this will probably only appeal to people with a strong interest in the minutiae of mediaeval scholasticism. The arguments presented in this text are tedious and long-winded, and will probably be mostly obscure to anyone who has not spent a great deal of time studying this material.

Unfortunately, the translator's comments are not terribly helpful in making sense of Udayana's arguments. Dravid rightly indicates at the beginning of the text that much of the discussion that follows is conceptually difficult, and he states that he will provide a running commentary to help the reader better follow it. In some instances Dravid's commentary is helpful, but much of it only further muddies the conceptual waters. Moreover, it tends to be highly repetitive, and this is only reinforced by the final section of the work, in which Dravid again covers the same material he discussed in the running commentary. In this section, Dravid provides an extended discussion of the arguments of the Ātmatattvaviveka, but there is little that has not already been stated in the first section, and little additional clarity is achieved.

Dravid's translation of the Sanskrit text (which he provides) is mostly competent but, as he himself admits, the terseness of the original would make a literal translation difficult, and so he has opted for a rather free rendering, adding a great deal in order to make difficult passages make sense in English. While this is a laudable idea, its execution is hampered by the translator's poor command of the English language. Dravid is obviously not a native speaker of English, but since this work is in English, the translator and publisher should have contracted a native speaker

of English to proof-read the manuscript. The work is replete with glaring grammatical errors, tortured syntax, convoluted sentences, and innumerable errors in the use of indefinite articles. The often bizarre neologisms Dravid creates to translate technical philosophical terms only further add to the problems in his translation and study. All of these factors make an already difficult text even more difficult and tedious to read.

Despite these problems, the translation of the Ātmatattvaviveka constitutes a contribution to our understanding of mediaeval scholastic polemics in India. It is a good example of the tone and structure of such debates, which although apparently aimed at opponents were primarily studied only by people belonging to the respective schools that produced them. Although Udayana appears to believe that his arguments have successfully refuted Buddhist positions, in most cases he misses the mark of Buddhist critiques entirely. This is the probable reason that the Ātmatattvaviveka, although an important text for Nyāya, has never caught the attention of any Buddhist scholar of whom I am aware. Although Udayana and his followers perceived his arguments as decisive, they simply fail to address the Buddhists in terms that they would recognise as valid. The discussion of momentariness and compositeness, for example, centres on linguistic arguments and is based on Nyāya realism. The Buddhist position, in contrast, is based on empirical observation of the operations of phenomena, which can be observed to disintegrate and disappear, and to be composed of parts. Udayana never actually addresses the Buddhist position.

Udayana's argument for the self is similar to Descartes' argument for the existence of God: Udayana declares that the self is completely beyond human experience, but is universally known by all beings, and so it must exist since no limited intellect could possibly conceive of such a thing unless it actually exists. As with the previous arguments, this completely fails to address the Buddhist critique of the Nyāya *ātman* doctrine, which is based on empirical evidence. Since, Buddhists argue, the self is never perceived, and since it has no observable effects, the only reasonable conclusion is that it does not exist, even though belief in it is widespread. Udayana never actually addresses arguments that

were put forth by Buddhists, and so not surprisingly Buddhists simply ignored his text as irrelevant to their critiques of Nyāya doctrines.

Dravid's translation and study of the *Ātmatattvaviveka*, despite its flaws, provides at least a rough translation of an important polemical text, and it also provides people interested in Udayana's arguments with accurate information concerning where in the text particular positions are presented. In addition, Dravid's comments on many passages accurately identify the intended opponents and the background of Udayana's arguments, which should prove helpful to readers who are new to this field. It is regrettable, however, that the author and publisher did not take the time to correct the many grammatical errors in the text, as this would have greatly enhanced its value.

John Powers

Buddhadhamma. Natural Law and Values for Life. Phra Prayudh Payutto. Translated by Grant A. Olsen. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY 1995. xxiv, 302 pp. Cloth \$59.50, pbk \$19.95. ISBN 0-7914-2631-9/2632-7.

This is the translation from Thai into English of a major exposition of the Buddha's teachings by an eminent contemporary personality of high ecclesiastical rank within Thailand's monastic system. On the back cover, the publishers claim that it 'makes a significant contribution to the scant literature on Theravāda Buddhism in English'. Some doubt may be expressed on both parts of that statement. First of all, the existing Theravāda bibliography in English — though modest as compared with that of Tibetan Buddhism or of Zen — is not all that scant. More importantly, while *Buddhadhamma* has much to offer the student of Thai society and culture (not a field of very general interest), one wonders how significant a contribution it is likely to make to a better understanding of the Dhamma on the part of interested, but non-specialised Western readers. The reader already versed in the teachings, on the other hand, will simply find a restatement of familiar themes which, though serious and reliable, is not cast in a particularly accessible mould. As the translator warns: 'readers who are not used to Thai or Buddhist discourse

are certain to feel that some explanations are rather lengthy and repetitive... While Phra Prayudh's style has been praised as modern, Western readers may still feel that this work is often quite wordy' (p.xxiii). In fact, what would have been needed to get Phra Prayudh's message across would have been, not a scrupulously scholarly translation like this one, but a free rendering in Western mode.

This being said, there is little doubt that, taken in its original context, Phra Prayudh's work would indeed seem to be a fairly radical attempt to restate in new, fresh ways old truths which have become dry and stereotyped in the course of centuries of formal monkish transmission. To this end, he departs from the time-honoured approach which starts by stating the Four Noble Truths and proceeds to a detailed exposition under those four headings. Instead, he adopts a scheme consisting in the combined presentation, step by step, of the basic teachings together with their practical application and ethical implications. A quotation from his introductory chapter (entitled 'The Things That Should Be Understood First') will make this clear and serve at the same time to exemplify what was just said about his style:

'If we divide the Buddhadhamma into two parts, *saccadhamma* and *cariyadhamma*, and then stipulate that this is used here by defining *saccadhamma* as the part that shows the conditions or true characteristics of dhamma, and defining *cariyadhamma* as the rules of conduct, it can be seen that *saccadhamma* in Buddhism refers to the teachings related to the conditions of all things, or nature, and the ordinary course of things, or natural law. *Cariyadhamma* refers to taking advantage of knowing and understanding the conditions and course of things, or knowing natural law and then applying it in an advantageous way. In other words, *saccadhamma* is natural law, while *cariyadhamma* is knowledge pertaining to the application of *saccadhamma*. All of these principles are not related to factors beyond nature, such as a creator god, at all. Presenting Buddhadhamma for the sake of only knowing and understanding theory is inadequate; *saccadhamma* and *cariyadhamma* will, therefore, be presented together, with the teachings coupled in terms of conditions that point to values that can be put into

practice. This method of presentation is opposite to the way of the Four Noble Truths (*ariyasacca*), which points primarily at the results and proper outcome of practice. The Four Noble Truths start with problems that initially appear and then move progressively towards the final goal; but here we will start with knowing and understanding the world and life in terms of Buddhadhamma. After that, the meaning or the value of practice will be explained until we reach the final goal of Buddhism' (pp.48-9).

The structure of the book comprises four main sections: 'What is Life?' (dealing primarily with the five aggregates), 'What is the Nature of Existence?' (discussing the three characteristics of existence), 'What is the Life Process?' (with an extensive explanation of dependent origination) and 'How Should Life Proceed?' (expounding the ethics of the Eightfold Path). Throughout, particular stress is laid on the fact that the Dhamma is not a teaching of withdrawal from, but rather a positive involvement with, the world, e.g.: 'the Buddhadhamma sees the internal life of the individual as intimately related to the external life of society and holds that values in the two realms are inseparably connected, compatible, and are, in fact, one and the same thing' (p.259). This message is forcefully recalled in the closing sentences of the whole book:

'It is crucial to keep in mind that if a person attains the higher, more refined levels of the Holy Life, social responsibility continues to be an important Buddhist principle. Whether the Buddhist community experiences prosperity or loss, stability or imbalance, all depends on the amount of importance placed on social concerns' (p.278).

This is certainly a healthy emphasis, and (as one gathers from the translator's introduction) a necessary one in today's Thailand, with its intricate political and ecclesiastical establishment and a confused social and economic situation.

Grant A. Olsen's translation of the *Buddhadhamma* text cannot, of course, be judged by one ignorant of the Thai language, but it does bear the stamp of reliable workmanship. His study of Phra Prayudh's life and work has clearly been a labour of love. He tells us about it in two separate prologomena. First, in

a 'Translator's Introduction' he examines some of the specific challenges he encountered and relates them to the broader framework of the discipline of translation. Having myself spent a lifetime wrestling with translations, I read this chapter with particular sympathy (though I did miss in the bibliography a reference to George Steiner's momentous *After Babel. Aspects of Language and Translation*). The 'Introduction' proper proceeds then to explain how Olsen came to his subject in the course of academic field research and comprises a brief biography of Phra Prayudh, a discussion of his position in the context of modern Buddhist movements in Thailand, and a very detailed publication history of *Buddhadhamma*. Too detailed, I would say, for a work that is not, or no longer, a doctoral thesis, though it does afford us some curious glimpses of what goes on behind the scenes, such as an official of the Ethics (!) Section of the Department of Religious Affairs in Bangkok forging Phra Prayudh's signature in order to collect a substantial sum (pp.13-14).

Amadeo Solé-Leris

Lebensbilder deutscher Buddhisten. Ein bio-bibliographisches Handbuch. Band I: Die Gründer. Band II: Die Nachfolger. Edited by Hellmuth Hecker. Universität Konstanz, Forschungsprojekt 'Buddhistischer Modernismus', Forschungsberichte 13-14, Konstanz 1996-7. 214 and 405 pp. No price given. ISBN 3-930959-09-7 and -10-0.

These are welcome second editions of very useful publications (first ed. 1990). In the first volume the author presents short life stories of ten early pioneers of Buddhism in Germany, all born in the last century and still active in the first half of the present one. Among them are Paul Dahlke, a medical doctor who wrote several thoughtful books on Buddhism and built the Buddhist House in Frohnau, Berlin; Georg Grimm, known in this country chiefly through the translation of his book *The Doctrine of the Buddha* which ran into several editions; Anton Gueth who became famous as Nyanatiloka Thera; Ernst L. Hoffmann who, as Lama Govinda, founded the Arya Maitreya Mandala; Karl Eugen Neumann whose excellent translations of the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima Nikāyas* are still being republished and widely read in Germany

after nearly a century; others may be less well known or unknown in this country, but their importance for spreading the knowledge of Buddhism in Europe is inestimable. All ten were prolific writers and speakers on Buddhism and the author has assembled an astonishingly detailed bibliography of their literary and lecture activities and has also included bibliographical sources about them.

Volume II contains biographies of the second generation of German Buddhists who followed in the founders' footsteps. One of the criteria for inclusion was that they must have passed away so that their story could be complete. That is why e.g. Nyaponika Thera (Siegmund Feniger), by far the most important of the group, was not included in the first edition, as he died only in 1994 (the *Festschrift* to his 90th birthday was reviewed in BSR II, 1994, pp.208-10). There are nine other new names in this edition.

Probably very few of the 123 names are known to Buddhists and even scholars in this country. But one who has secured for himself lasting worldwide fame is Edward (originally Eberhard) Conze, born 1904 in London while his father was posted here as a diplomat. This enabled him to settle in Britain when he had to flee Germany in 1933 to avoid arrest by the Nazis as the chairman of the Communist Party organisation in Bonn. He first survived by teaching German privately, but soon his like-minded leftist pupil Ellen Wilkinson (later a minister of education under Attlee) helped him to become a tutor in psychology in the Extramural Department of London University. I remember him reminiscing about that time: he had a troublesome pupil in his class who constantly complained about his foreign accent and eventually made a remark about immigrants from who knows where. Conze's answer was: 'I am, like your royal family, British-born of German stock'. Thereafter he never had any complaints.

He went to Spain in 1936 and saw something of the sinister machinations among different groups of Marxist opponents of Franco. Subsequently he acquainted himself with Stalin's vision of the communist order and, having thus 'seen the light', he plunged into the study of Buddhism with known results. Most of his life he was restless and a wanderer, refusing to settle down when he was offered the chair of Indology at Tübingen University in 1959.

But he held guest professorships in Bonn, Lancaster and various universities in the USA. His wit never failed him. I remember another story from his public appearances. When interviewed about Buddhism on American television, he was asked about the working of rebirth in the context of a constantly rising birth rate which had been, it was pointed out to him, very high in the USA during the past 200 years. 'Where have all those newly born Americans come from?' Conze's reply: 'And where do you think all those buffaloes have gone?'

Another Buddhist from German-speaking territories who was active in the Buddhist movement in England and may be remembered by some was Ruth Walshe (born Meisel, died 1971). Paul Carus (1852-1919) who emigrated to the USA via England in 1883 is, of course, still known through his successful book *The Gospel of Buddha*. As in the first volume, a detailed bibliography of literary and lecture activities of the entrants is included where appropriate and so are bibliographical sources about them and pictures of almost all of them. In some instances there are also references to criticisms of their views by other Buddhist writers. A truly excellent source book which has no parallel in the English-speaking world.

Karel Werner

Tibetan Studies. Jan Willem De Jong. (*Indica et Tibetica* 25), Indica et Tibetica Verlag, Swisstal-Odendorf 1994, xi, 254 pp. Pb, DM64. ISBN 3 923 776 25 X.

This is a collection of the author's articles and reviews written in English and French and published between 1955 and 1985 in various journals and collections of papers. Reviews prevail, there are twenty-four of them out of thirty-two items. It is quite unusual to republish reviews in a book and it shows the esteem in which the author's work is held by the editors of the series. The reviews are quite detailed and sometimes substantial, amounting to review articles.

Four items are concerned with the story of Rāma in the Tibetan context; one of them contains well told summaries of several of its versions. They are followed by reviews of three

different books on Milarepa and of the two translations of his poems into English. Two reviews concern books on Naropa and one a book on Tsong Khapa's *Speech of Gold*. Seyfort Ruegg and Snellgrove each get a review of one of their books, but there are five reviews of Walther Heissig's works on Mongolian texts. Of great interest for the study of Mongolian Lamaism is the review of the book in Russian by Š. Bira about the 'Golden Book' by S. Dandin (1867-1937). Several other erudite book reviews will be of interest to specialists, including one on a German book by Peter Zieme and Györgi Kara dealing with the Uigur 'Book of the Dead'; it concerns four manuscript texts held in the British Museum which are translations from Tibetan and were found in Dunhuang. De Jong, reading just the reproductions of the texts, found that the authors had often misread the originals and made elementary mistakes when translating them.

Of the original articles, there is an important bibliographical introduction to the works of Sum-pa mkhan-po (1704-88), known mainly for his book on the history of Buddhism in India, Tibet, China and Mongolia; a study of the Gaṇḍavyūha in connection with a Tibetan text inspired by it and published, with a translation into French, in 1981; a linguistic piece concerning the meaning of a Tibetan phrase (*blag-pa/blags-pa*) important for a fine point of doctrinal interpretation; and an obituary of the eminent Tibetologist George N. Roerich (1902-60), with a bibliography of his works.

The scholarship exhibited in this volume is impressive. The editors and publishers deserve to be congratulated on their decision to make its fruits, which will be most useful to future researchers into the themes covered, easily accessible in this volume.

Karel Werner

The Last Forbidden Kingdom. Mustang: Land of Tibetan Buddhism. Clara Marullo, photographs by Vanessa Schuurbeque Boeye. Thames and Hudson, London 1995. viii, 134 pp. £25. ISBN 0-500-01676-3.

Following the lifting of restrictions in 1992, the above intrepid duo undertook the arduous discovery of the northernmost part of

Nepal which is surrounded by Chinese-occupied Tibet on three sides. Unlike Michel Peissel's pioneer narrative account, *Mustang: A Lost Tibetan Kingdom* (London 1968, Delhi 1992), Marullo's text represents a concise overview of this *shangri-la*, warts and all, highlighting its precarious future which is endangered by an influx of tourism aided by an indifferent Hindu establishment in the Nepalese government. Buddhism has always and will doubtless continue to embody the heart of Mustang and the author most accurately sums up the appeal of this beleaguered region: 'Interwoven at every level, faith is the foundation that underpins the community and informs the rhythms of daily life' (p.38). An objective text combined with a collection of truly magnificent colour plates, ensures this modest compilation a place in every Buddhist library.

On the debit side, however, with no hint of an American imprint, one may well ask why there are American spellings throughout. In the 'Glossary of Tibetan Terms' (p.134), we have *bodhisattva* (*sic.*), Bodhgaya relocated to Nepal, *lama* as 'Tibetan Buddhist monk', *mantra* as 'Words...recited during meditation to calm and purify the soul', and *Sacred Texts of Hum* (?) 'The main body of the Tibetan canon of faith'.

Despite these imperfections, this volume will remain a memorable record of a little-known people who, in a rural context, warrant emulation.

RBW

The Buddhist Art of Nāgārjunakonda. Elizabeth Rosen Stone. Buddhist Tradition Series 25, ed. Alex Wayman. Motilal Banarsi das, Delhi 1994. 143 pp. Rs.600. ISBN 81-208-0828-2.

In the twenty-five years I have been involved with Buddhism and Buddhist scholarship, I have never been able to understand how it is possible to discuss any aspect of it without a thorough grounding in the practice itself. And yet books on Buddhist art with a skimpy understanding of Buddhism get published with frightening regularity. The present volume, which is the 25th in a series, is no exception. There are 282 black and white illustrations in this book, 100 page of text and 25 pages of notes (396 notes). This seems rather lopsided and unsatisfactory, especially in that the

illustrations are not really explained in the text. What we are given is an exercise in creative Buddhism: that is, the author makes it up as she goes along.

The longest chapter is on the evolution of the Nāgārjunakonda style. This chapter might usefully be seen as an evolution of questionable assumptions. These arise out of a previous series of assumptions relating what might have been the functions of Buddhist sculptures found in sites belonging to different Buddhist schools made by twentieth century Buddhist scholars. It becomes quickly and painfully clear that neither Stone nor her sources understand what they are dealing with, especially when it comes to what Westerners call 'worship' of the Buddha, referring either to the *buddharūpa* or the *stūpa*.

There is no point in going into all the silly statements about the so-called 'cult of the *stūpa*'. The fact that they are there at all signals travels into further unreality. And there is little to be gained by concerning ourselves with the twentieth century context reference to patrons — especially royal ones. While both of these themes are immensely popular with art historians — especially Americans — they do nothing to help us understand what is important or relevant about Buddhist 'art'. Indeed, it is questionable that discussion of 'evolution' of a particular 'style' — for which there seems precious little evidence — helps us. It does not seem to occur to Stone that her entire line of enquiry, from which she admits she finds really no textual or doctrinal support, might be a false one. What little is written by Buddhists about Buddhist 'art' is quite technical and practical rather than doctrinal. And it is quite late.

Here I must admit to having filled the margins of the text with as many question marks as there are pages. I do not understand statements like: 'The worshipper monk faced a choice; if he went into one *chaitya grha* he worshipped a *stūpa*, in the other, a complete standing image of the Buddha' (p.17). I am not comfortable with descriptions of *stūpa* construction and decoration as representations of types of 'Buddha', most particularly the suggestion that it 'with its central axis would be the *dharma-kāya* or Law Body [of the Buddhas]. . . the *āyaka* pillars. . . would represent the *sambhogakāya* or Bliss Body meant for the gods and

the low reliefs against the drum and dome of the *stūpa* would represent the *nirmanakāya* or assumed body of the Buddha' (p.53).

Sad to say, her basic thesis, these and similar remarks indicate to me that this volume adds a great deal of confusion to any comprehension of Nāgārjunakonda. This is most unfortunate as so much of the archaeological publications of the 1920s and '30s from which most of the illustrations were taken may never be properly approached and critically analysed.

Mary Stewart

Thailänderinnen im Schmelztiegel der Ausländerpolitik. Helmut Klar. E.G. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt (Main) 1997. 50 pp. Pb DM29.80. ISBN 3-89501-437-0.

Readers who remember the review of the book about Helmut Klar as one of the oldest witnesses to the history of Buddhism in Germany (BSR 14, 1197, pp.97ff.) — a fine tribute to him by Martin Baumann in the University of Konstanz series, 'Buddhist Modernism' — may also recollect a short reference in the review to a condensed article, included in the book, on xenophobia against Thai women (originally published in *Rundbriefe zur buddhistischen Soziethik* 8, Salzburg, and in the journal of the Thai-German Society, both in 1994). Now we have a fuller and updated account of the problem in this amazing little book (which also gives, in the Introduction, a brief account of the reasons for the author's involvement with Thais, more fully related in Baumann's book). There are some 100,000 Thais living in Germany, among them many men and women who came there to seek employment, most often in catering, but the cases the author gained knowledge of concern Thai wives of German nationals, some of them subsequently divorced by their husbands. There seems to have been quite a surge of German men wedding young, attractive Thai women when holidaying in Thailand, and many of these marriages must have proved happy, but it appears that a substantial number of husbands later found themselves unable to cope with the cultural, religious and, in some cases, age difference.

The problems highlighted by the author start when a Thai woman has to go out to work. This happens even in lasting marriages when there is a need to supplement her husband's income,

but when she finds herself on her own with children to support she is most vulnerable and faces many difficulties: first, there are language problems, which usually force her to take up only menial jobs. This is aggravated by wage discrimination, widespread against foreign workers, especially female ones, and further by the ease with which employers can terminate the Thai women's employment, leaving them confused as to the rights and wrongs of the procedure and ignorant of how to find help. (The author does not fail to mention, however, that Thai employers in Germany, often owners of Thai restaurants, are the worst offenders in this respect.) Second, the general attitude to foreign workers, seen as economic immigrants, has become largely negative. Third, Thai women are often summarily viewed as former prostitutes because of the tainted image of Thailand caused by the reputation of red-light districts in Bangkok as tourist sex-havens.

All this influences not only the views of the public at large, but even the attitudes of officialdom. The author lists cases of official unhelpfulness and obstruction and even of deliberately misleading information. One particular case, when a patient in a hospital was used as a guinea pig for intimate examinations by students without explanation or permission, with a subsequent unjustified demand for payment for hospitalisation unnecessary for treatment, stands out above all others, although there are further, almost unbelievable, cases of hardship and helplessness.

The author describes in fascinating detail how he managed to help several of the desperate women, in the face of all possible discouragement (even from Buddhist friends) and despite his advanced age and disability, enduring considerable discomfort. But the problem is beyond an individual's capacity. Gradual improvements, the author hopes, can be achieved by stressing the high cultural and artistic achievements of Thailand which stem from its Buddhist background and are after all documented on most tourists' photographs and which should overshadow the image disseminated by sex tourism. Such an effort, together with befriending and assisting Thais in Germany, should surely be a concern of the not insignificant number of German Buddhist individuals and organisations.

Karel Werner

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